



2

# Magus of the Library

Mitsu  
Izumi

Based on *Kafna of the Wind* by Sophie Schwimm  
Translated by Hiroto Hamada



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2

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*"The knowledge won through reading is great.  
But it is no substitute for experience."*

—Phil Asopp

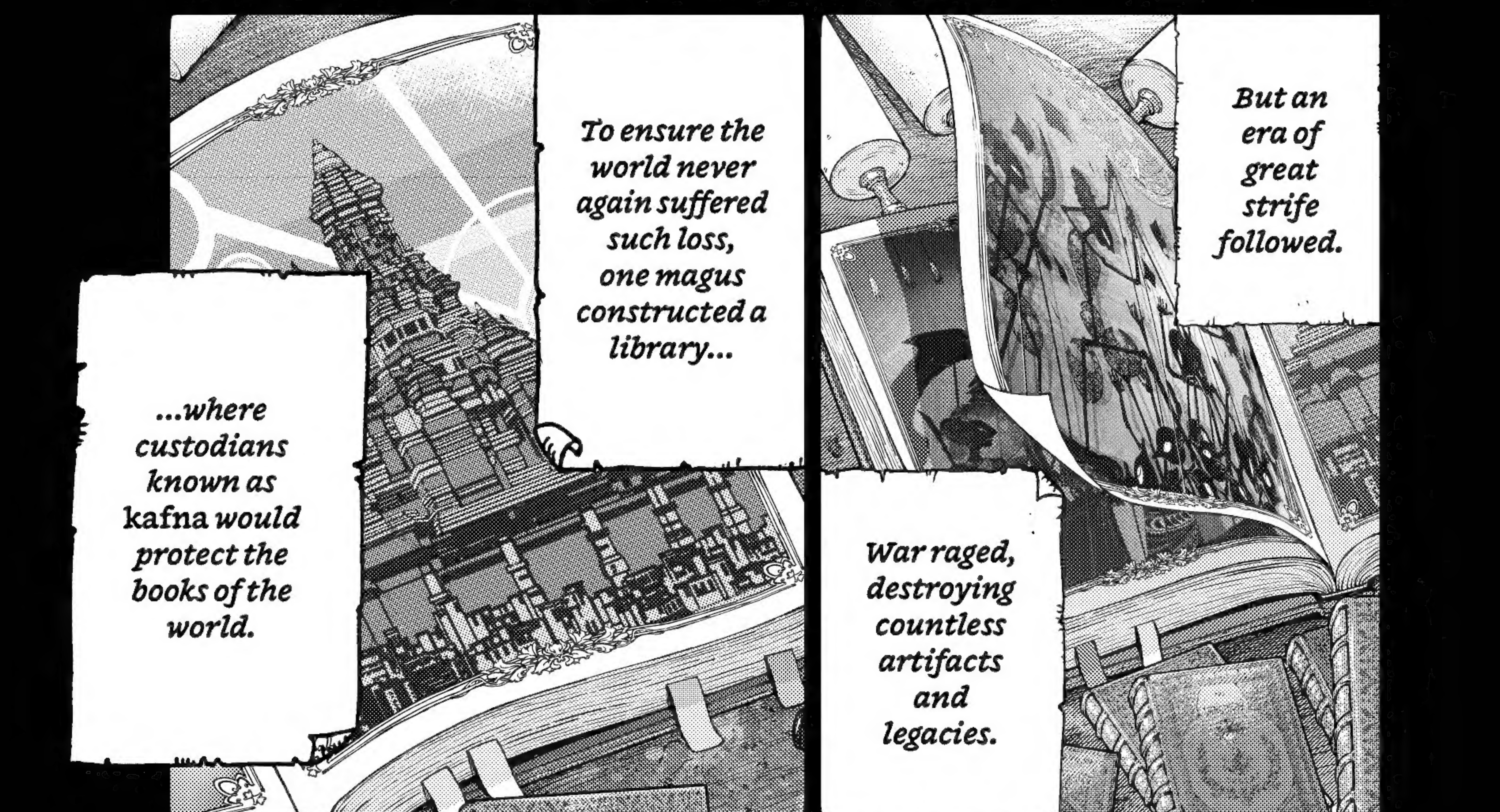
From *The Flood of Knowledge*





*Seven talented magi used their power to save the people from the brink of devastation.*

*Long, long ago, a cataclysm known as the Emissary of Wormwood ravished the continent.*

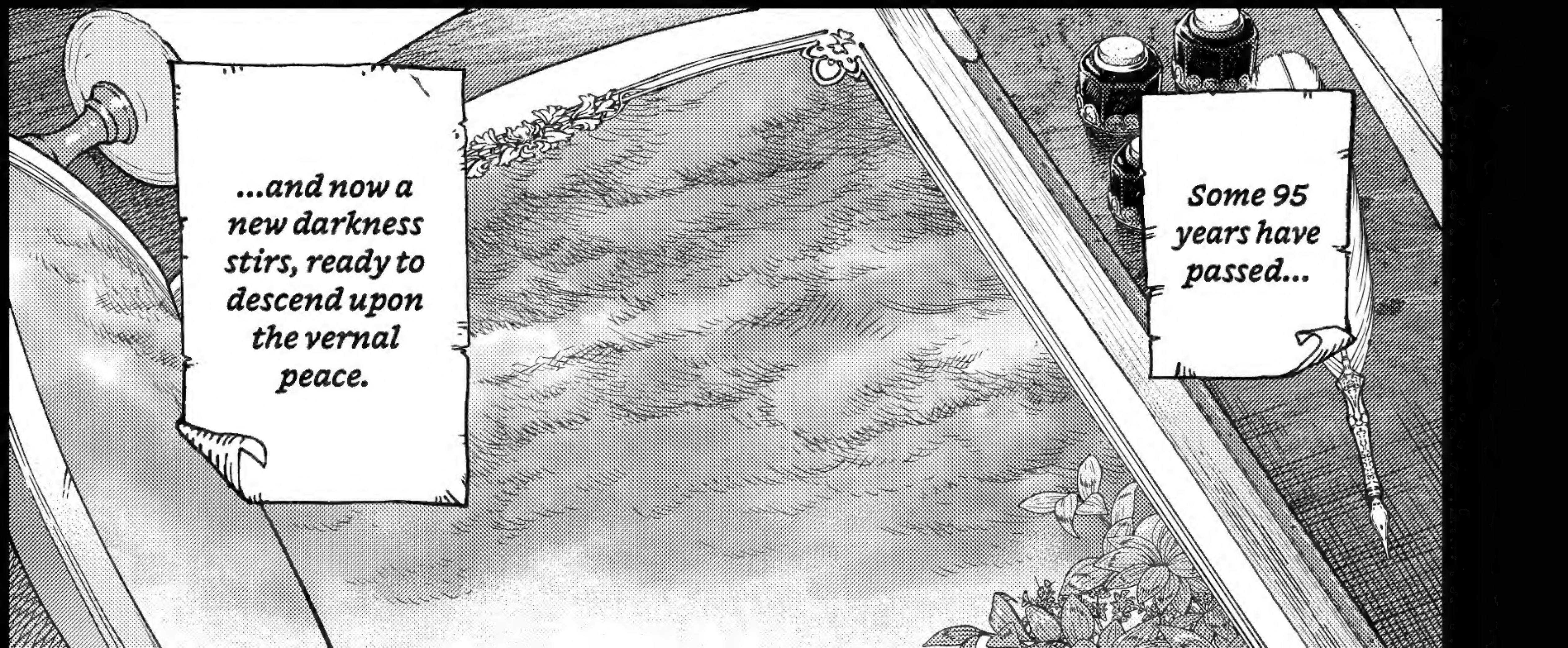


*To ensure the world never again suffered such loss, one magus constructed a library...*

*...where custodians known as kafna would protect the books of the world.*

*But an era of great strife followed.*

*War raged, destroying countless artifacts and legacies.*



*...and now a new darkness stirs, ready to descend upon the vernal peace.*

*Some 95 years have passed...*



*...of a kafna  
who fought so  
that the world  
could live on.*

*This is the  
story...*

*Based on*  
**KAFNA OF THE WIND**  
*by*  
**SOPHIE SHWIMM**



# 圖書館の大魔術師

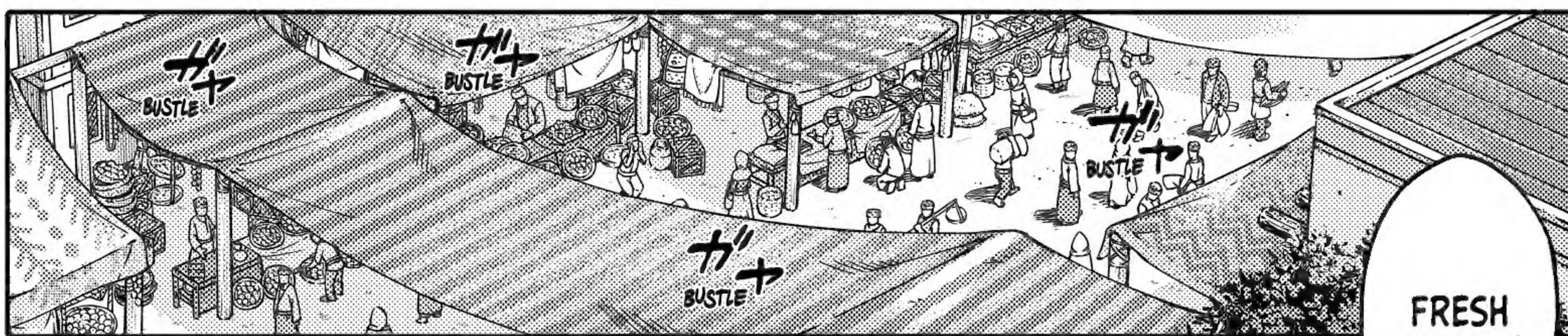
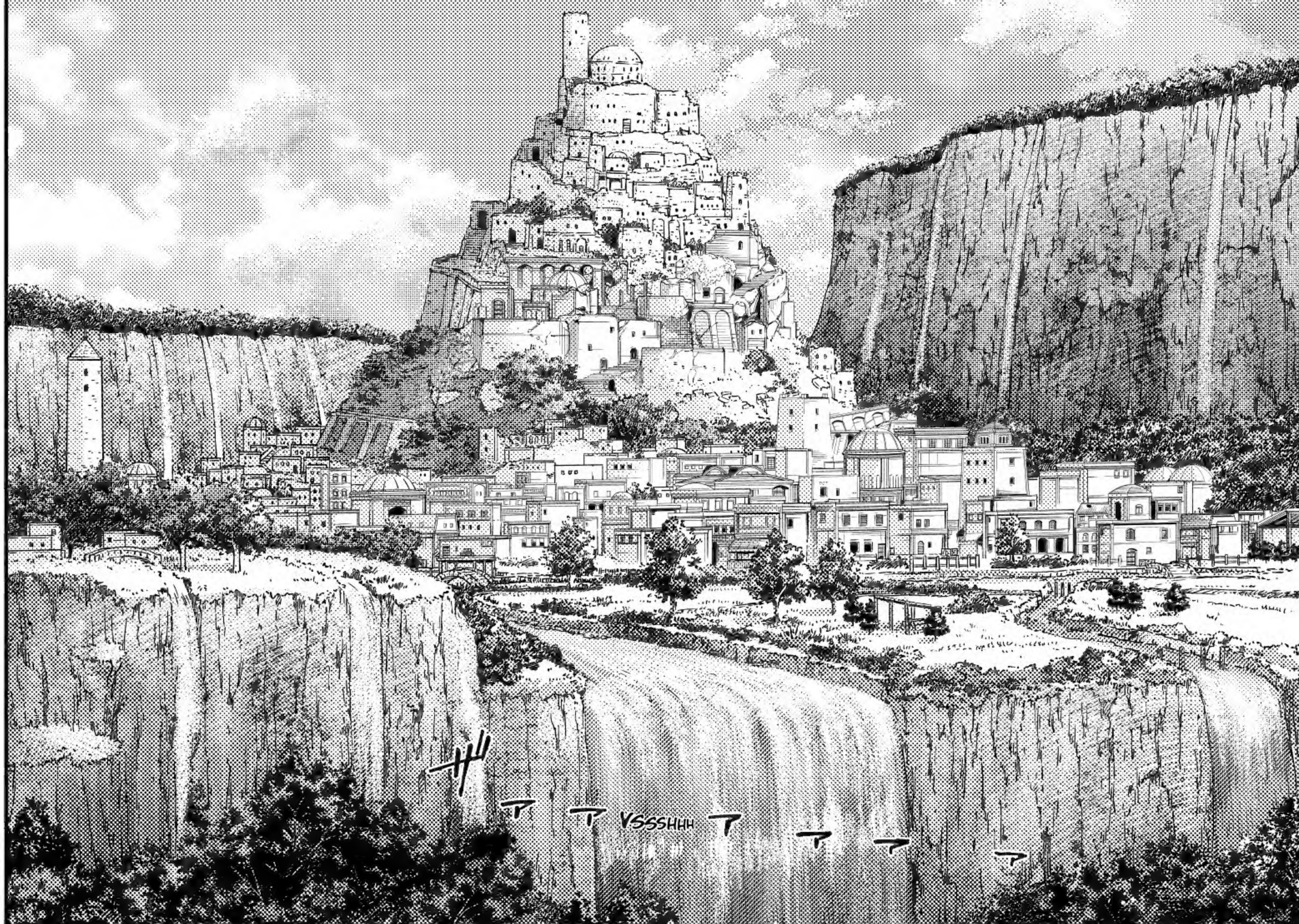
Magus of the Library







The Hyron Autonomous Region  
Khamsa, Town of the Waterfalls



FRESH  
BREAD!



JOLT  
!!!



COULD I  
GET ONE  
TASHKARI,  
PLEASE?

YOU  
GOT  
IT—



KRNC...



GET YOUR  
FRESHLY  
BAKED  
BREAD!





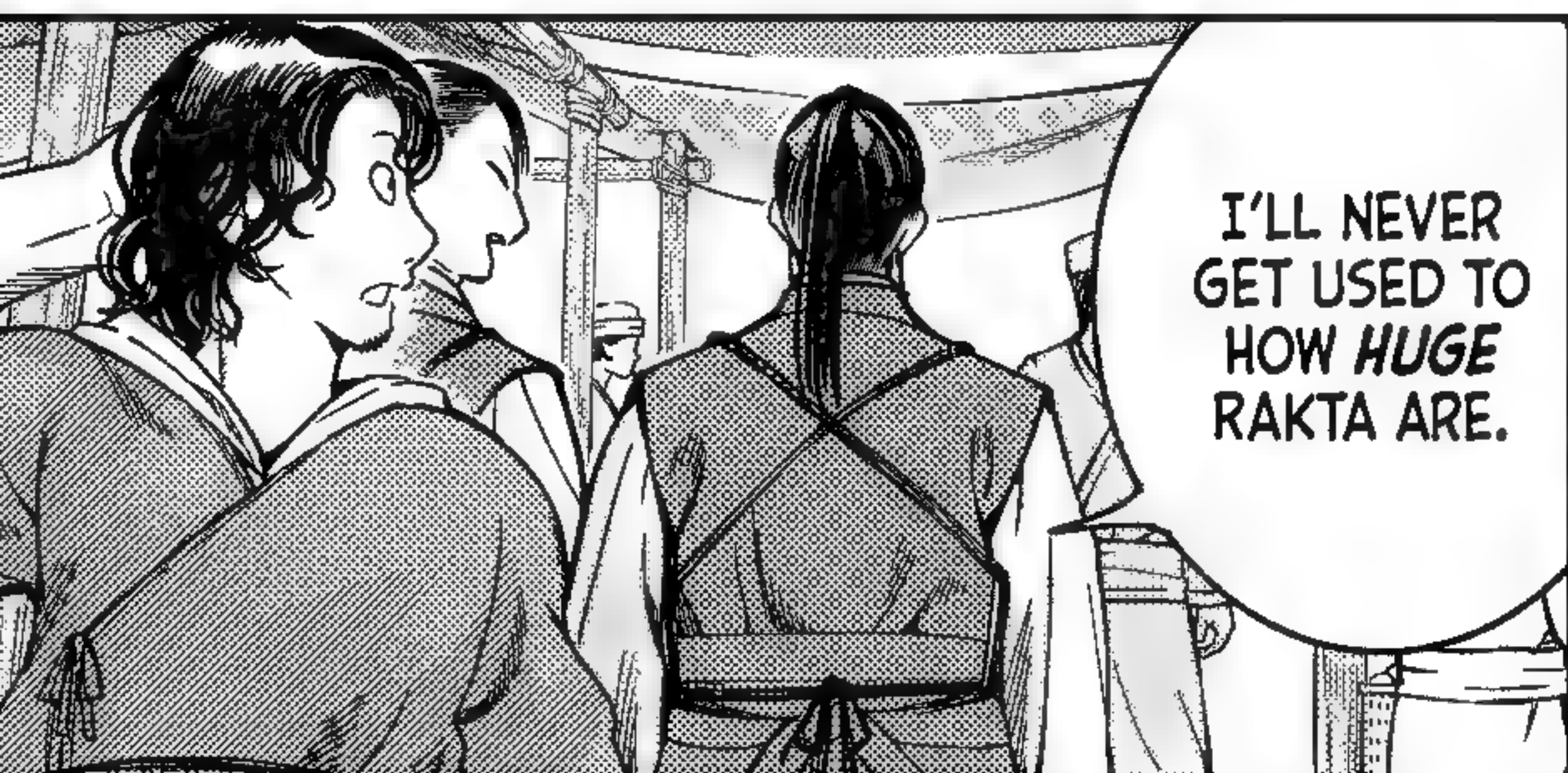




THE  
FAULT  
WAS  
MINE.

NO  
...

UH,  
PARDON  
ME!



I'LL NEVER  
GET USED TO  
HOW *HUGE*  
RAKTA ARE.



UGH.  
CAN'T THEY  
STICK TO  
THEIR *OWN*  
MARKETS?



AND  
YOU  
KNOW  
WHY.

PEOPLE  
CAN'T GET  
ENOUGH OF  
THAT FANCY  
SILK OF  
THEIRS.

SEEN' A  
LOT MORE  
OF THEM  
AROUND  
LATELY.



LOUSY  
FOREIGN-  
ERS.

I'D BE  
HAPPY TO  
SEE THEM  
GONE.



HUH  
?!

HOLD  
IT RIGHT  
THERE,  
YOU LOUSY  
FOREIGNERS!



AND  
BESIDES,  
THAT  
RAKTA  
SILK IS TO  
*DIE* FOR!

JUST BE  
HAPPY  
WE'RE AT  
PEACE!

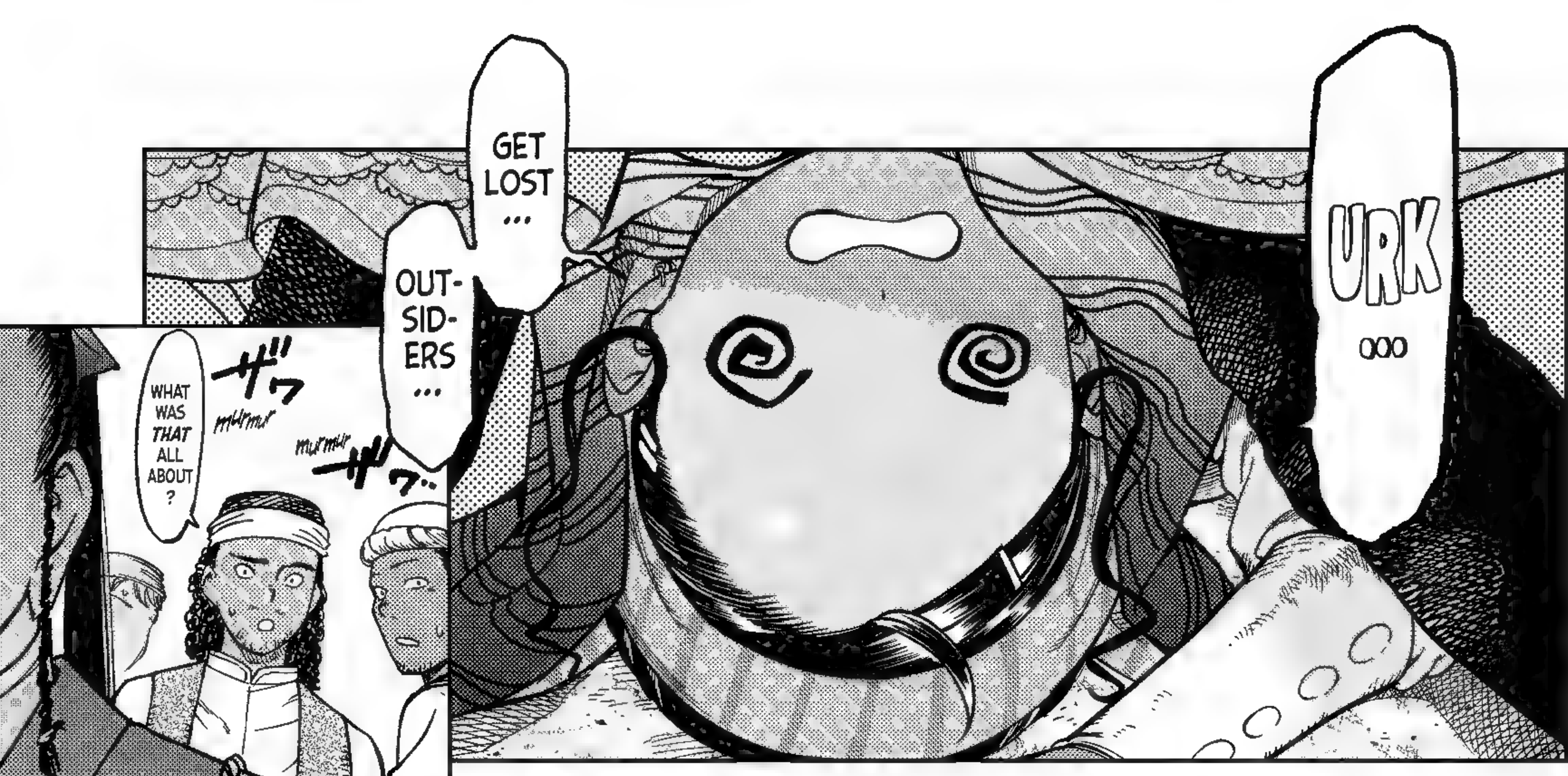
WHOA,  
WHOA!  
YOU  
DON'T  
*SAY*  
STUFF  
LIKE  
THAT!

OH,  
YEAH.  
LIKE *YOU*  
COULD  
EVER  
AFFORD  
ANY.









GET LOST ...

OUT-SID-ERS ...

URK

ooo

WHAT WAS THAT ALL ABOUT?



WHAT HAPPENED?

I COULDN'T SEE MUCH, BUT I THINK A COUPLE OF RAKTA SENT A LITTLE GIRL FLYING.

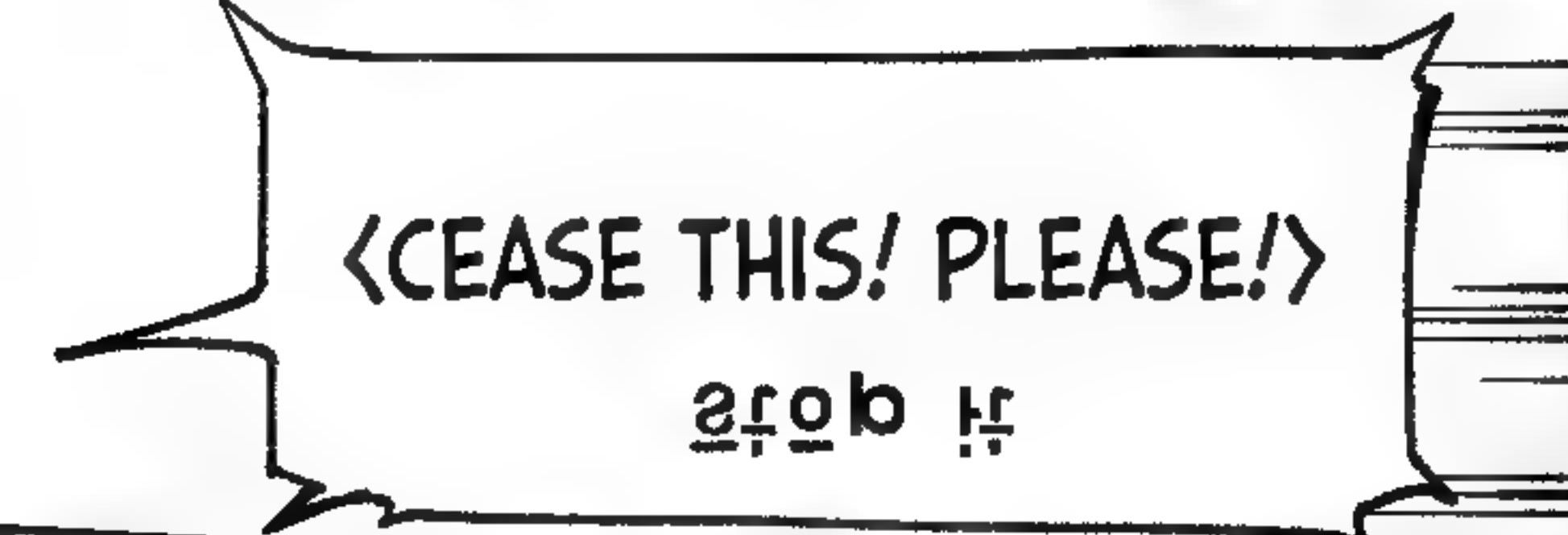
WHAT'S GOING ON OVER HERE?



WHAT ABOUT ALL THAT TOUGH TALK EARLIER?!

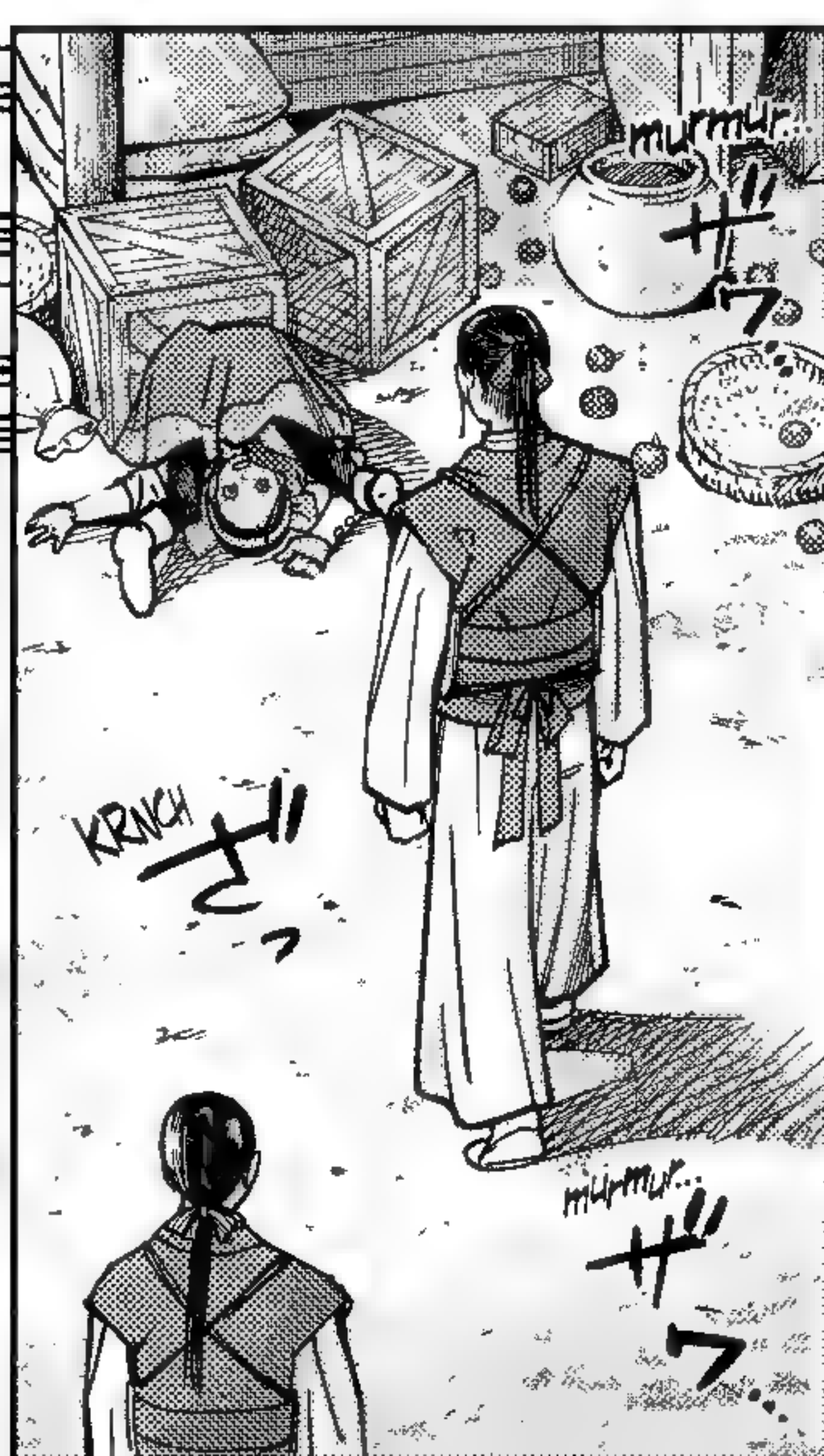
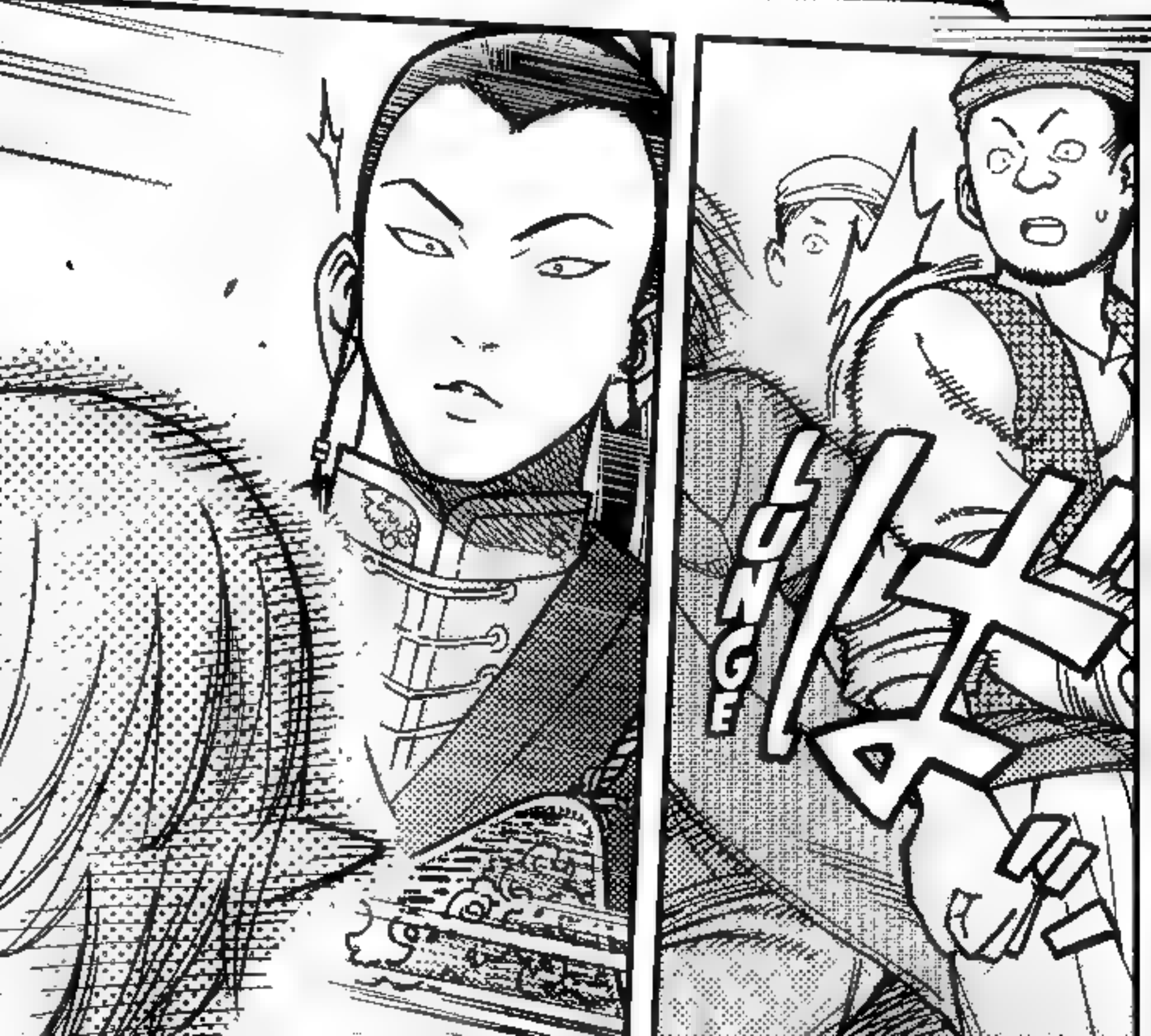
N-NO WAY. THOSE GUYS'RE HUGE AND KINDA SCARY.

GET OVER THERE AND HELP HER!



〈CEASE THIS! PLEASE!〉

ꠘꠗꠐꠗ ꠘꠗ



KRINCH

murmur

murmur



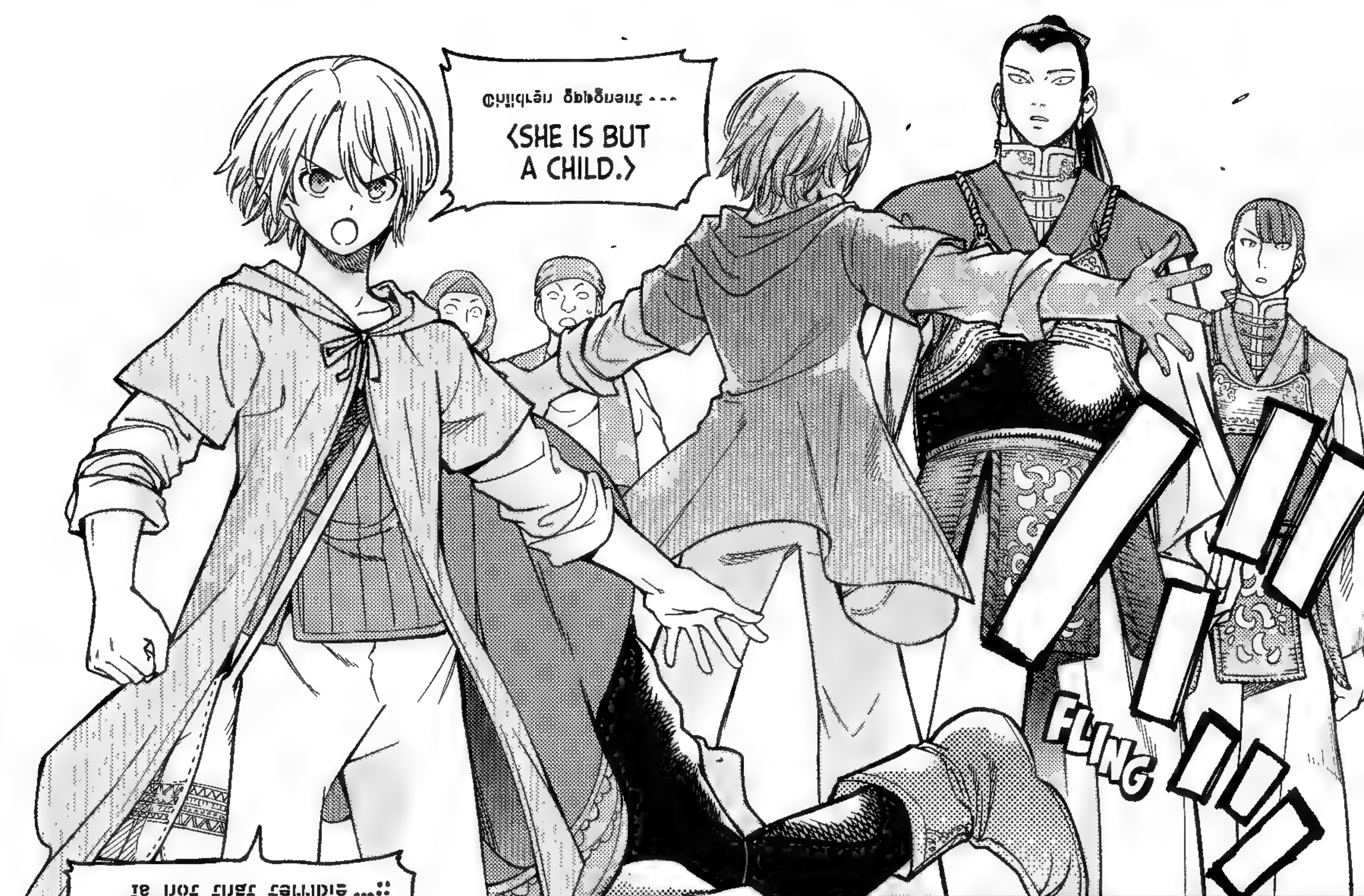
ROAR

ISN'T THE TERM "SLANT-EYES" TABOO?

UH OH. HE'S MAD, NOW.

I HEAR NOTHING CAN HOLD BACK AN ANGRY RAKTA...





...သိပ်ပဲကလေးကလေးကလေး

〈SHE IS BUT  
A CHILD.〉

...အဲဒါကလေးကလေးကလေး

〈HOW DARE YOU?!〉

A HALF-BLOOD?



HUH  
...?

LET US  
BE CLEAR.  
IT WAS THE  
GIRL WHO  
ASSAULTED  
US.

HE CAN  
TALK IN  
HYRON!



HE SPEAKS  
IN RAKTA.



WHAT  
IS  
HE?!

WHO'S  
HE?!

FLUMP...

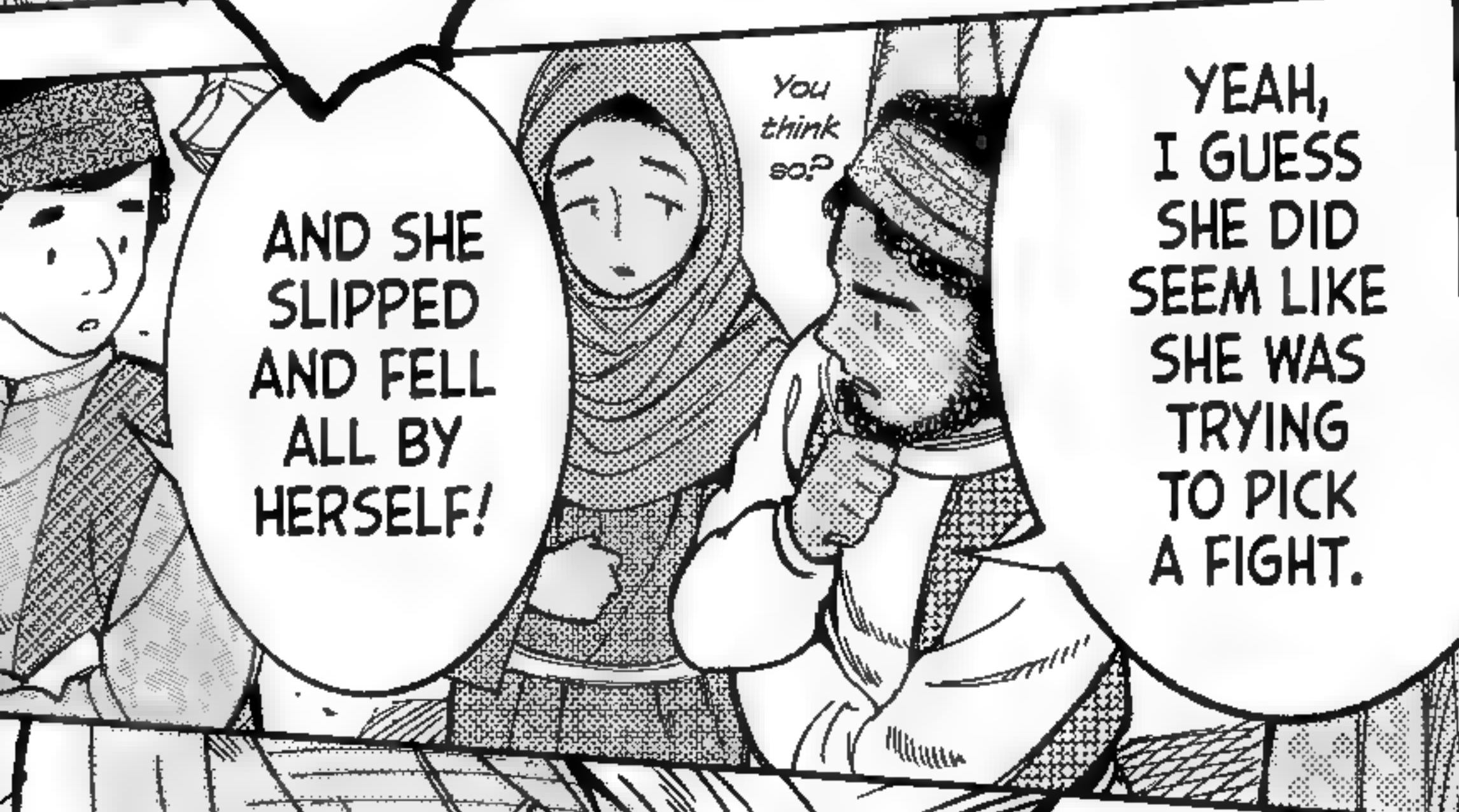




HUH  
?!

WHEN SHE  
DID NOT  
MOVE, WE  
WENT TO  
CHECK THAT  
SHE WAS  
UNHURT.

WE  
DODGED  
HER  
BLOWS,  
AND SHE  
FELL.



AND SHE  
SLIPPED  
AND FELL  
ALL BY  
HERSELF!

*You  
think  
so?*

YEAH,  
I GUESS  
SHE DID  
SEEM LIKE  
SHE WAS  
TRYING  
TO PICK  
A FIGHT.



REALLY  
?!



IT WAS  
QUITE  
INCOMPRE-  
HENSIBLE.

SHE  
CAME  
AT US  
OUT OF  
NOWHERE.



THIS IS A  
MATTER  
BETWEEN  
RAKTA  
AND THE  
GIRL.

SHE HAS  
INSULTED  
OUR  
ENTIRE  
RACE.

YOUR  
APOLOGY  
MEANS  
NOTH-  
ING.



I  
APOLOGIZE  
ON BEHALF  
OF THE GIRL,  
TOO.

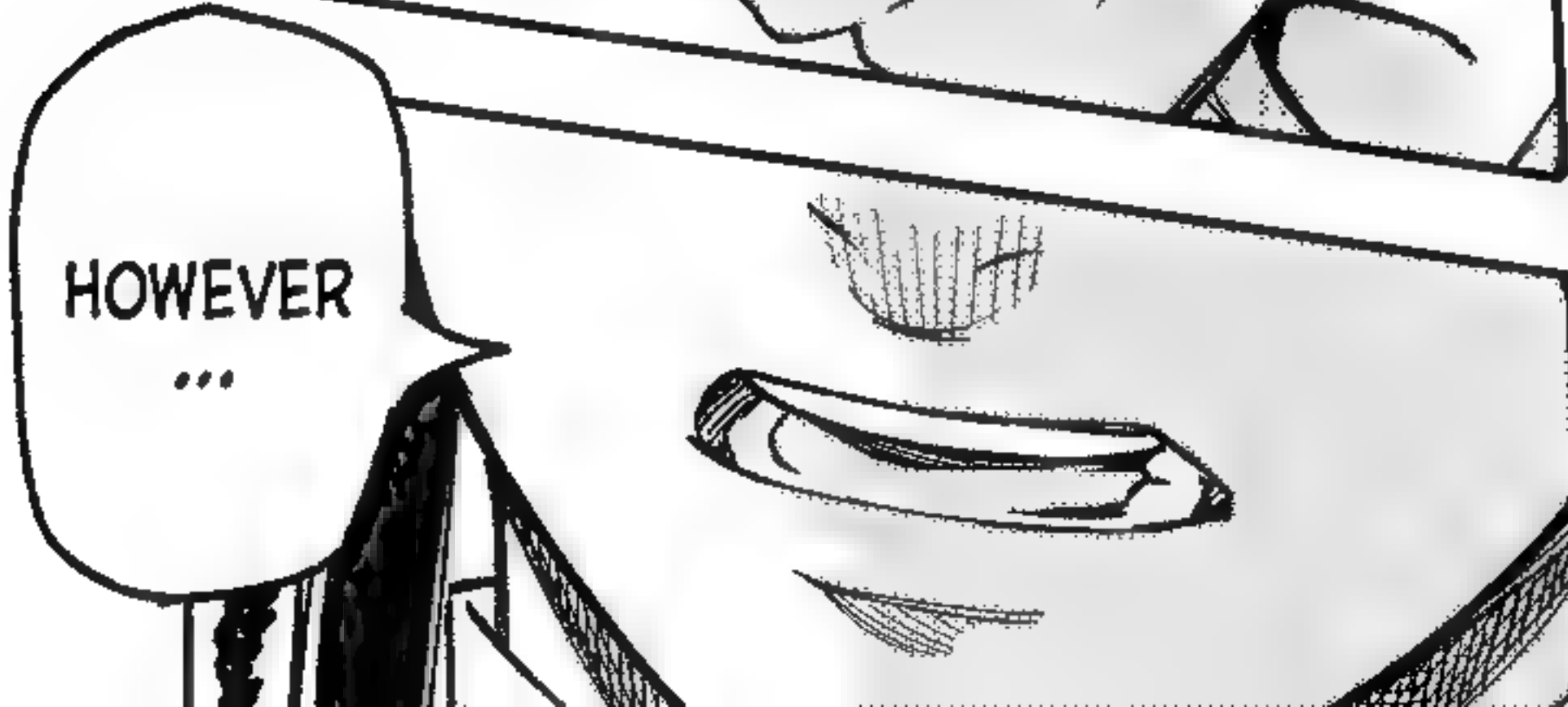
PLEASE!  
I BEG  
YOU!  
FORGIVE  
HER!



〈I-I'M SO SORRY!!〉

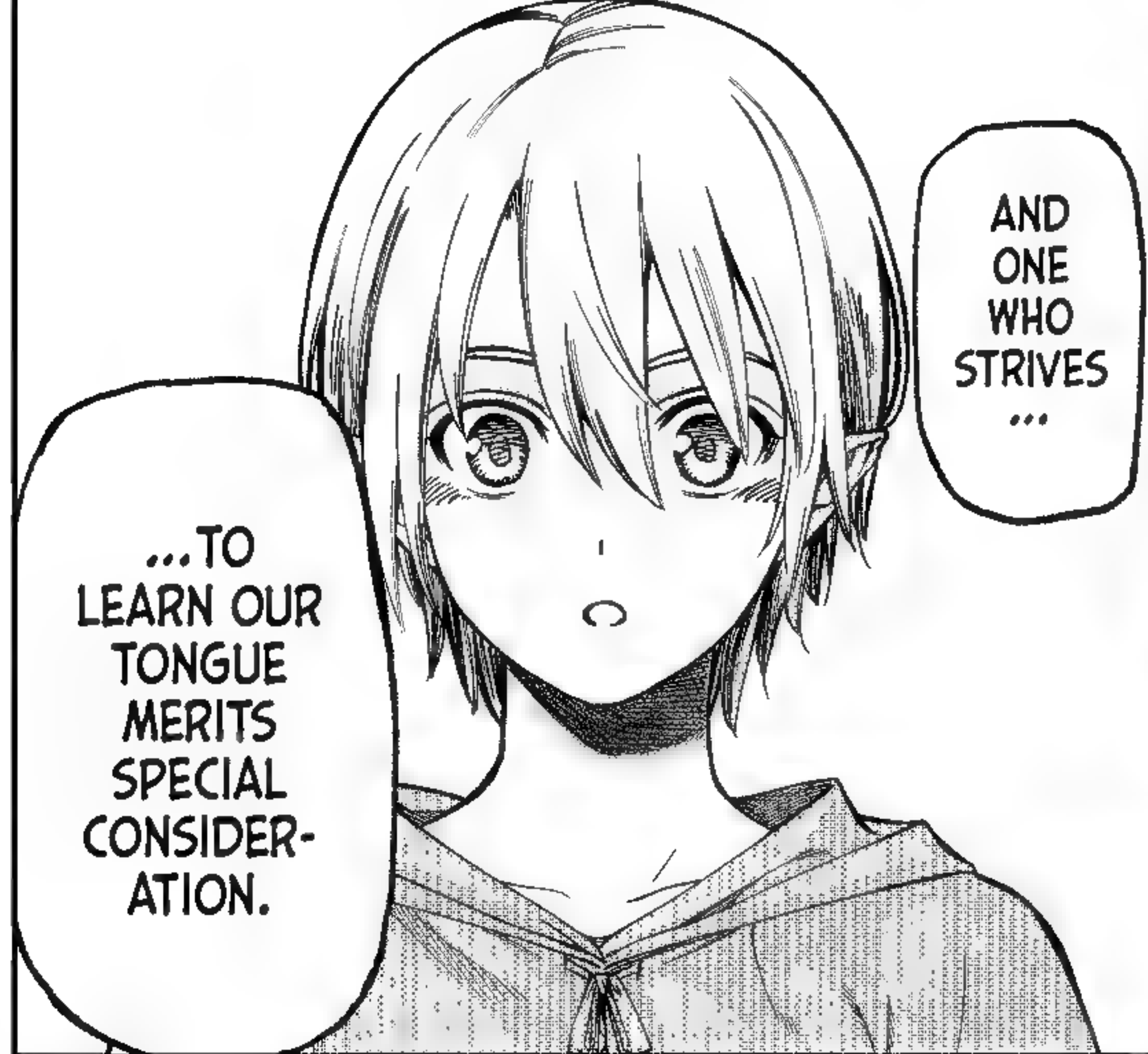
በገጃሉ ላይ ሲሆን ይመስላል ።

MY  
ACCUSATIONS  
WERE IN  
ERROR!



HOWEVER  
...





...TO  
LEARN OUR  
TONGUE  
MERITS  
SPECIAL  
CONSIDER-  
ATION.

AND  
ONE  
WHO  
STRIVES  
...



...WE  
SHALL  
OVER-  
LOOK  
IT THIS  
TIME.

SUCH IS NOT  
UNCOMMON  
ON OUR VISITS  
TO OTHER  
REGIONS.



PLEASE.  
LEND  
AN EAR  
TO HER  
GRIEVANCES.

THE GIRL  
SEEMS TO  
HARBOR AN  
INTENSE  
DISLIKE  
FOR OUR  
PEOPLE.



이 모양을  
〈INDEED.〉

〈A RATHER UNUSUAL  
COMBINATION TO  
BEHOLD.〉



chatter

BUSTLE

BUSTLE

chatter

Blond!  
He's a  
Blond!

Wow,  
you're  
brave!

〈WHEN I SAW THAT  
BOY'S EARS...〉

이런 모습은 정말  
드물게 볼 수 있는 것  
입니다.

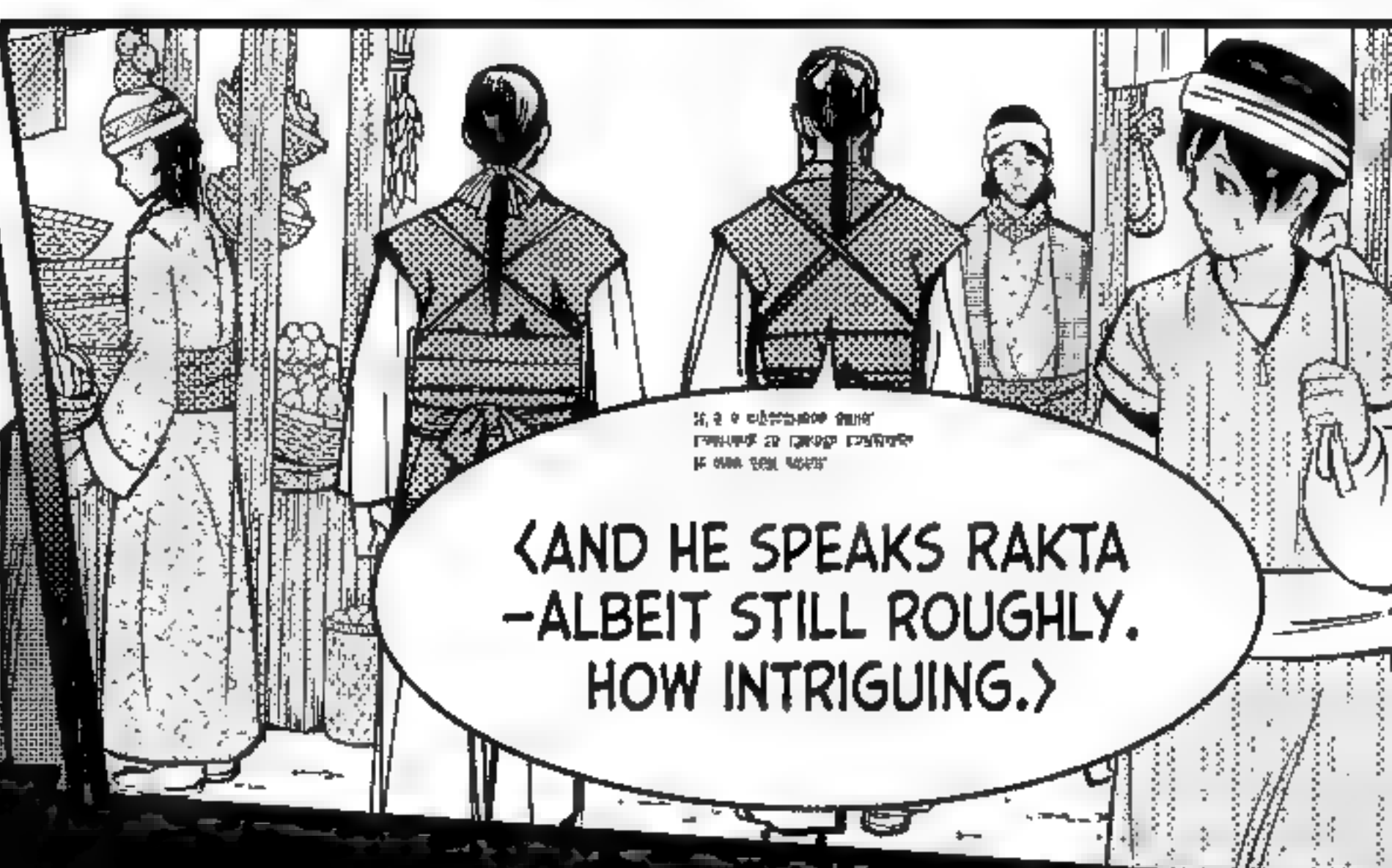


〈PERHAPS WE HAVE  
WITNESSED SOME  
MIGHTY SEED JUST  
BEGINNING TO SPROUT.〉

이 모양을 보면  
정말로  
부끄러워할 만합니다...

〈PERHAPS.〉

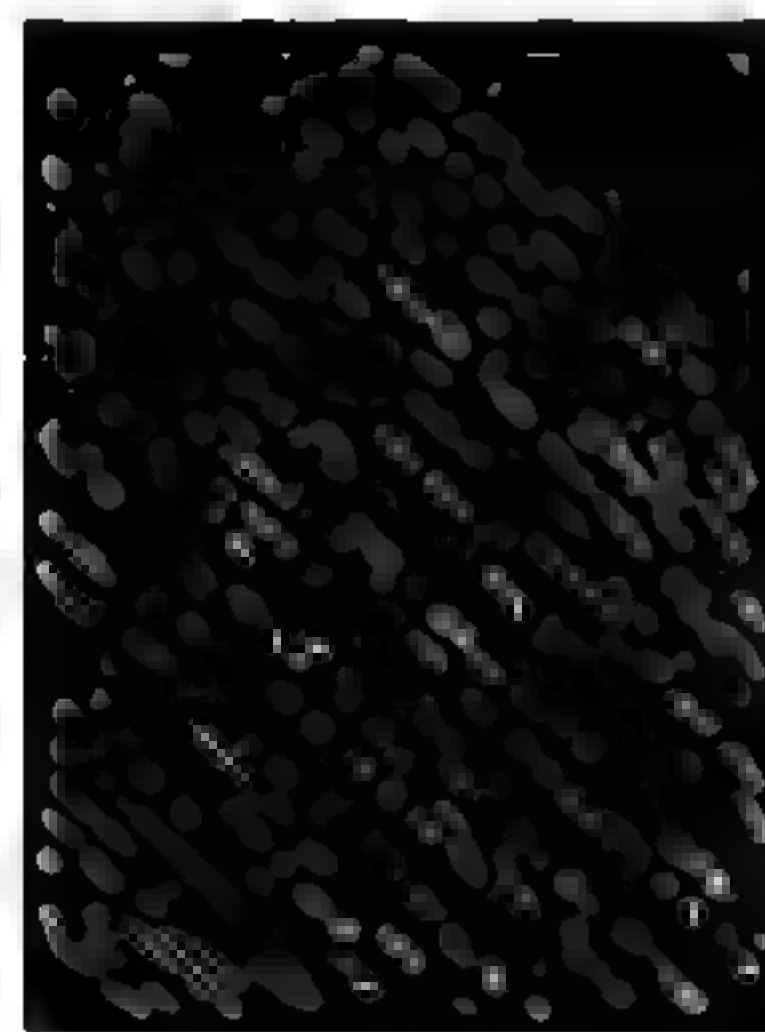
이런 모습은...



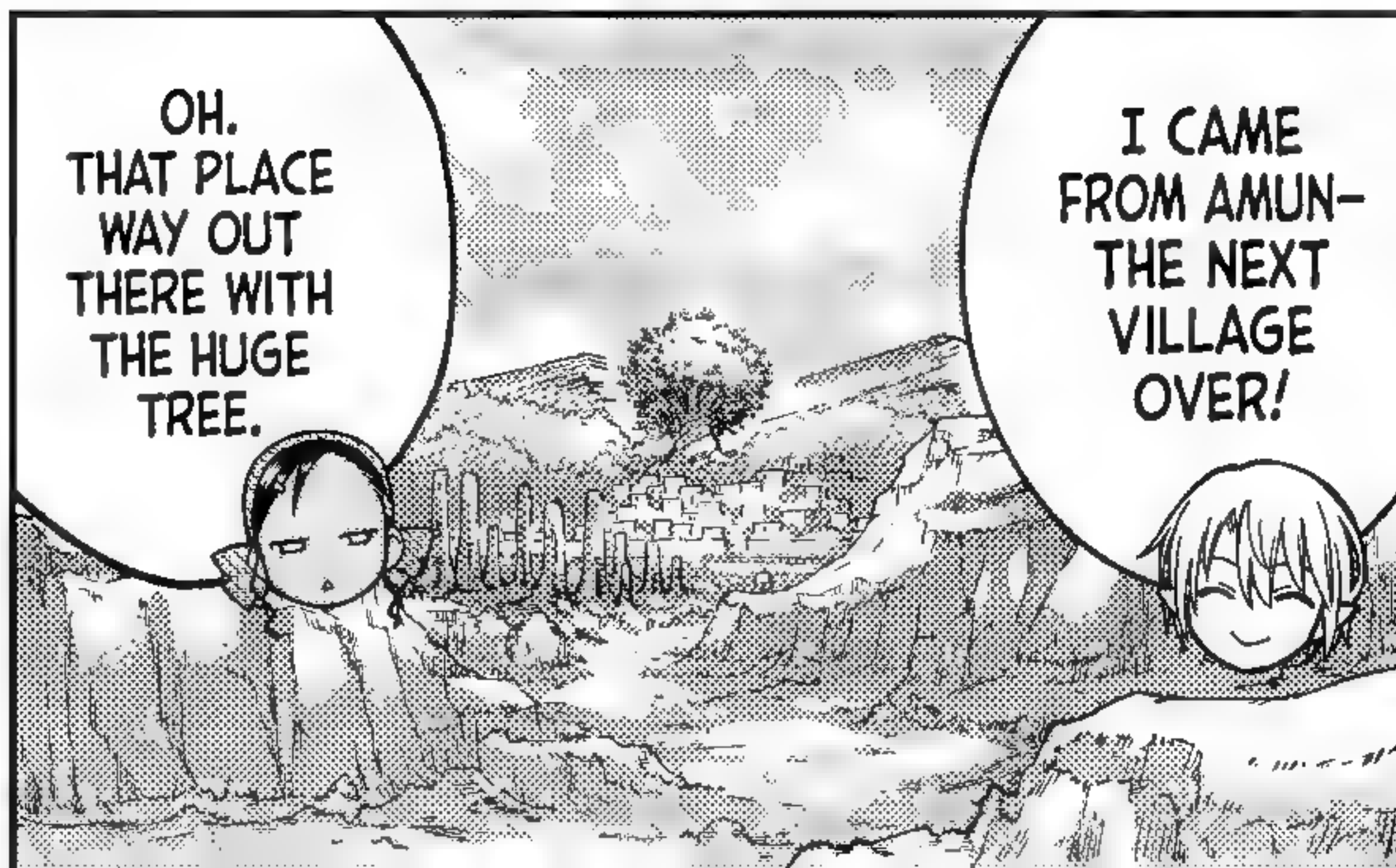
〈AND HE SPEAKS RAKTA  
-ALBEIT STILL ROUGHLY.  
HOW INTRIGUING.〉



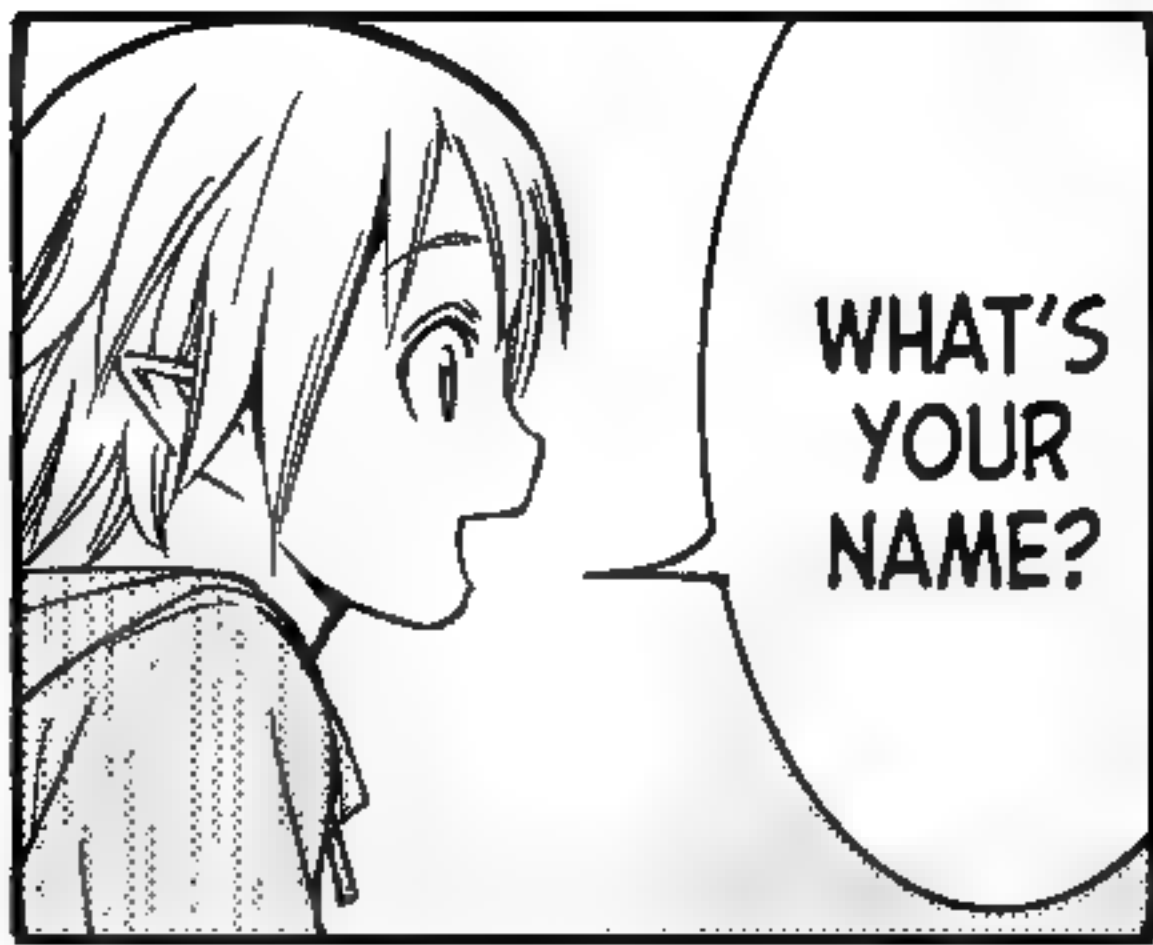
















THEY  
SHOULD  
GO BACK  
TO THEIR  
OWN  
LAND.

WHAT'RE YOU  
DEFENDING  
THOSE RAKTA  
FREAKS FOR?

ISN'T  
GETTING  
JOSTLED  
AROUND  
PRETTY  
NORMAL  
AT THE  
MARKET?

THEY WERE  
THE ONES  
BUMPING  
INTO  
EVERYONE!

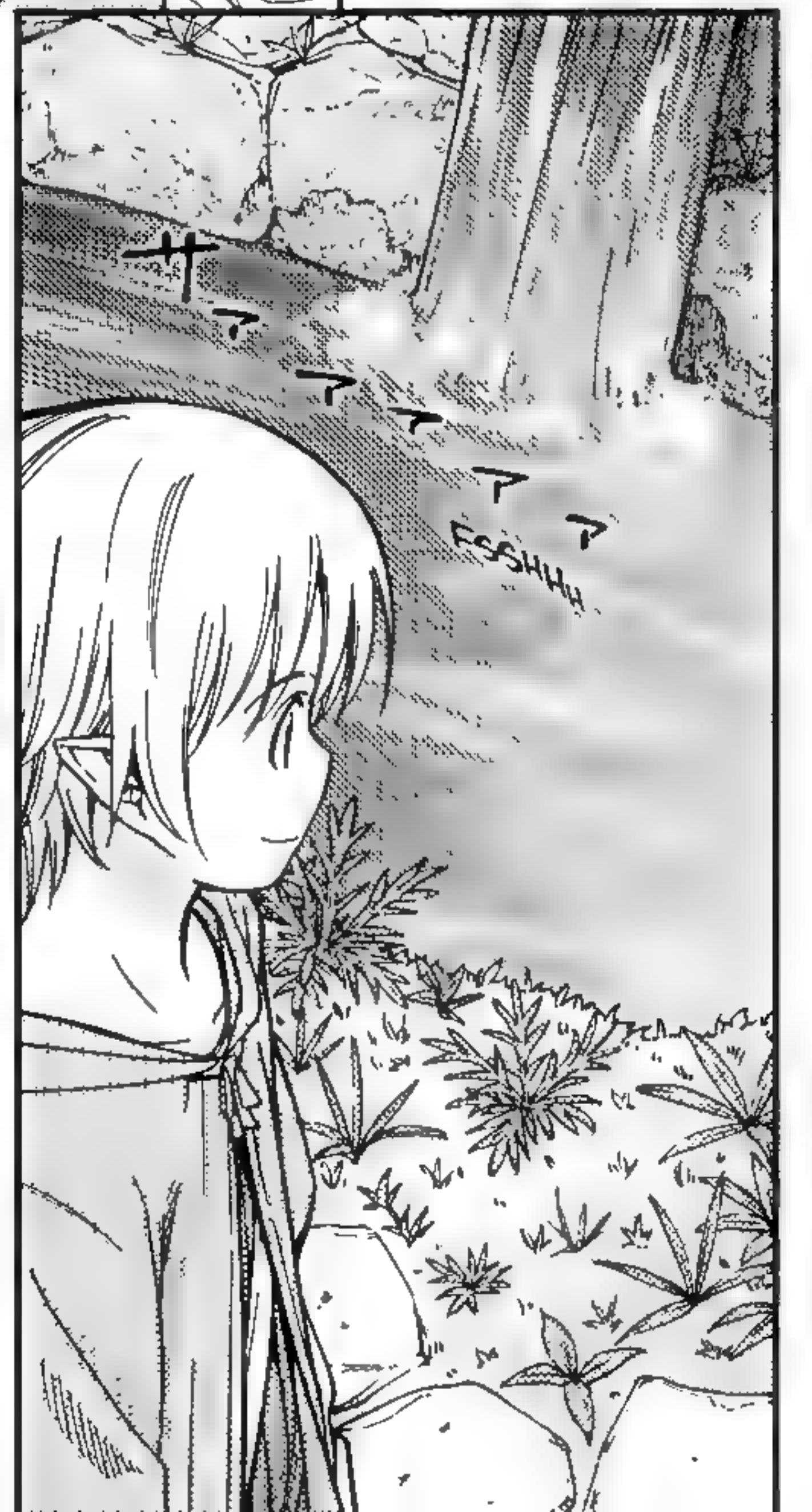


LONG-  
EARED  
FREAK  
!

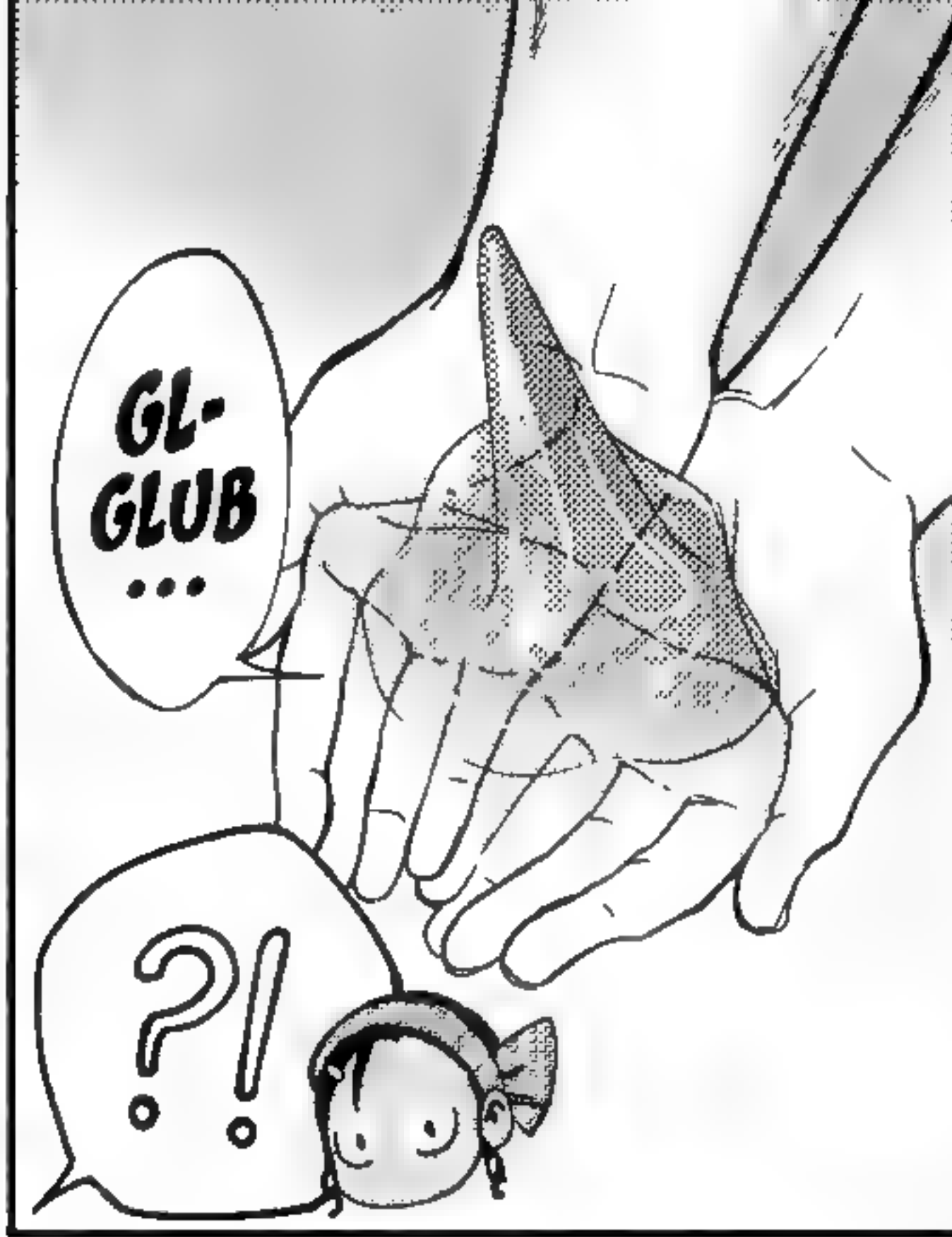


WOULD  
YOU LEAVE  
ME ALONE,  
AL-

HEY,  
CHAAK!  
WATCH  
THIS!











LET'S SIT  
DOWN  
SOME-  
WHERE  
AND EAT.

I PICKED  
THESE UP  
AT THE  
MARKET.







AND HE ALWAYS STICKS HIS TONGUE OUT TO MAKE FUN OF ME!

THAT'S PROVO-CATION!



THE FIRST TIME I MET THE GUY, HE SMACKED ME ON THE HEAD!

THAT'S ASSAULT!



MM-HM. I SEE.

*Of course, sheep and birds are pretty cute, and we eat them.*

I'VE EVEN HEARD THAT RAKTA EAT CATS.

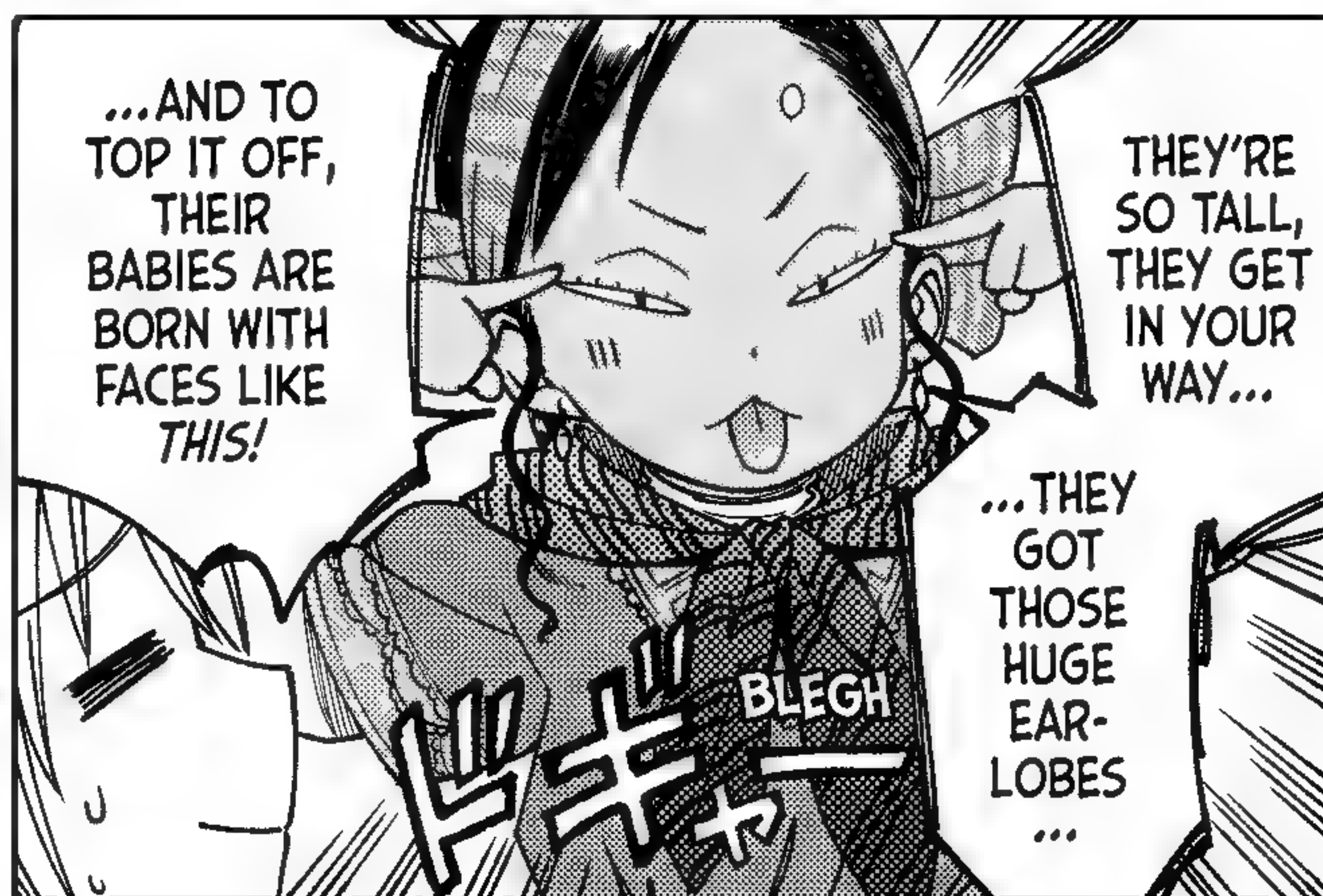
WHO COULD EAT A CUTE, INNOCENT KITTY?!



I SEE. SO YOU DON'T WANT THIS WEDDING TO HAPPEN.

HOW DOES YOUR FATHER FEEL?

...HE'S GIVEN IT HIS BLESSING.



...AND TO TOP IT OFF, THEIR BABIES ARE BORN WITH FACES LIKE THIS!

THEY'RE SO TALL, THEY GET IN YOUR WAY...

...THEY GOT THOSE HUGE EAR-LOBES ...



INSTEAD, HE TELLS ME IT'S NO BIG DEAL.

THIS ISN'T A JOKE. I THOUGHT FOR SURE HE'D FORBID IT.



THERE'S NO WAY A MARRIAGE WITH A FOREIGNER COULD EVER WORK OUT.





**NO!  
YOU'RE  
ABSO-  
LUTELY  
RIGHT!**

I AM?



BET  
YOU  
THINK  
*I'M*  
THE ONE  
IN THE  
WRONG  
HERE.

BUT LOOK  
WHO I'M  
TALKING TO.  
NOT LIKE  
YOU'D EVER  
AGREE.

HMPH.

KICK

HMM  
...



AND  
THE BEST  
METHOD  
FOR  
STAYING  
ALIVE...

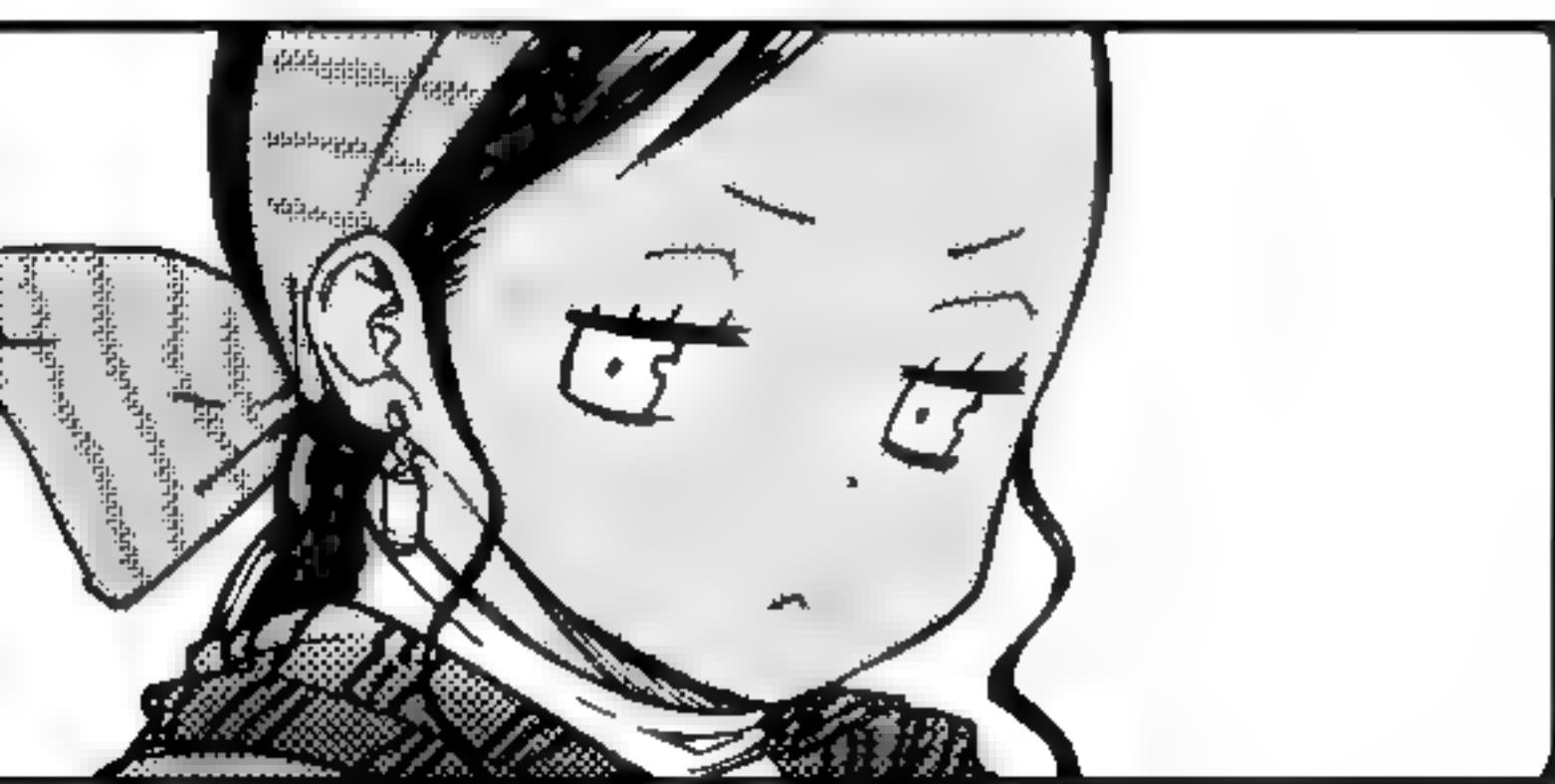
...WAS TO  
KEEP FAR  
AWAY FROM  
UNFAMILIAR  
THINGS.

THE  
WAY YOU FEEL  
ISN'T WRONG.  
IT'S NATURAL  
TO BE HESITANT  
ABOUT  
INTERACTING  
WITH  
FOREIGNERS.

FOR EONS,  
LIVING CREATURES  
HAVE HAD TO LIVE  
IN CONSTANT  
FEAR OF BEING  
ATTACKED  
OR EATEN.

ALL  
ANIMALS-  
OURSELVES  
INCLUDED-  
ARE BORN  
WITH THAT  
KEEN SENSE  
OF DANGER.





YOU'RE  
REALLY  
STRANGE.



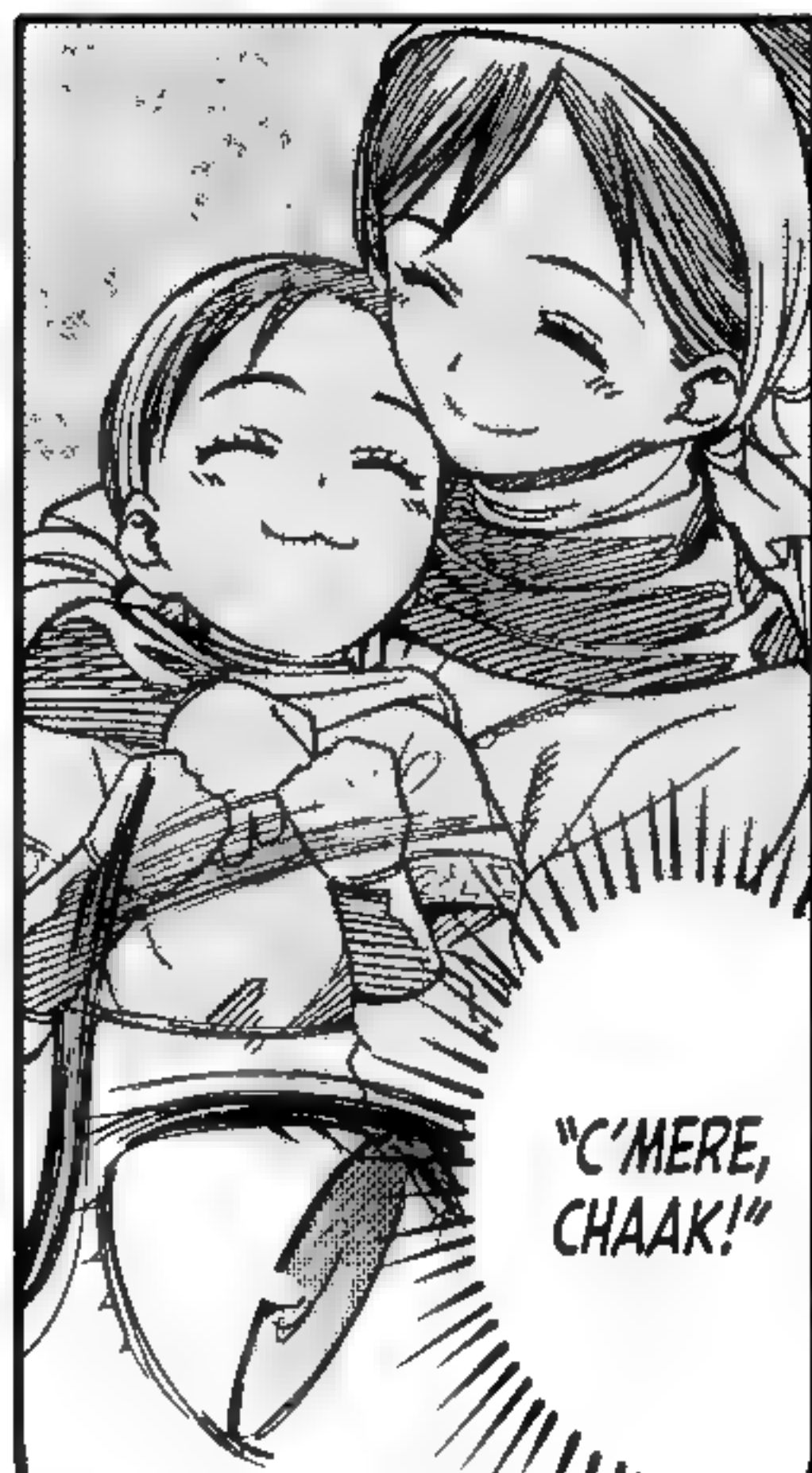
I'M  
PRETTY  
CREEPY  
LOOKING,  
AREN'T  
I?

*It's so  
true!*

PERFECTLY  
NATURAL!



SO IF I  
THINK  
YOU LOOK  
COMPLETELY  
REPULSIVE,  
THAT'S  
NATURAL,  
TOO?



"C'MERE,  
CHAAK!"



YOU WANT  
HER TO  
BE HAPPY,  
RIGHT?

IT  
MAKES SENSE  
YOU'D BE  
CONCERNED IF  
YOU DIDN'T  
KNOW A THING  
ABOUT HER  
HUSBAND-  
TO-BE.

ANYWAY,  
MAYBE  
THIS ISN'T  
SO MUCH  
ABOUT  
DISLIKE  
OF RAKTA...

...AS IT IS  
ABOUT LOVE  
FOR YOUR  
SISTER.



...?

WHERE  
?!



...THERE'S  
SOMEWHERE I  
WANT YOU  
TO TAKE  
ME.

HEY,  
CHAAK  
...

HUH  
?



*SMILE!*



SHE'S  
MY  
SISTER.

OF  
COURSE  
SHE'S  
IMPORTANT  
TO ME.





I WANNA  
VISIT THE  
TOWN  
LIBRARY!



HEH  
HEH  
HEH!

HEY, SO  
WHAT ARE  
WE DOING  
HERE?



...I DEFINITELY...

...DON'T WANT  
TO GO BACK HOME.



"I  
HATE..."

"...YOUR  
STUPID  
WEDDING!"



"CHAAK!  
WAIT!"



WHY DID I  
AGREE TO  
COME WITH  
HIM?

WELL...



IT'S  
SO MUCH  
BIGGER  
THAN THE  
ONE IN MY  
VILLAGE.

OH,  
WOW!

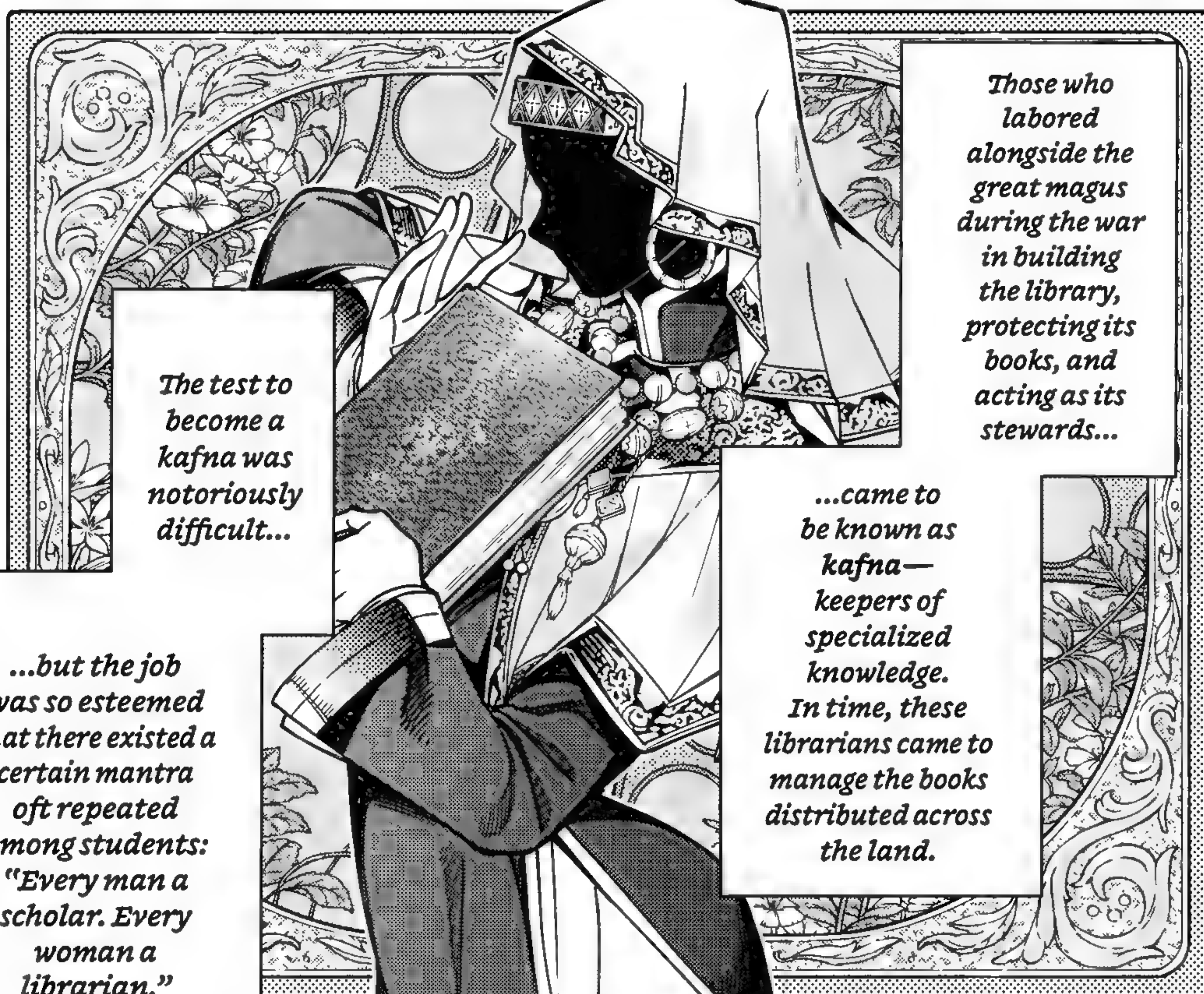




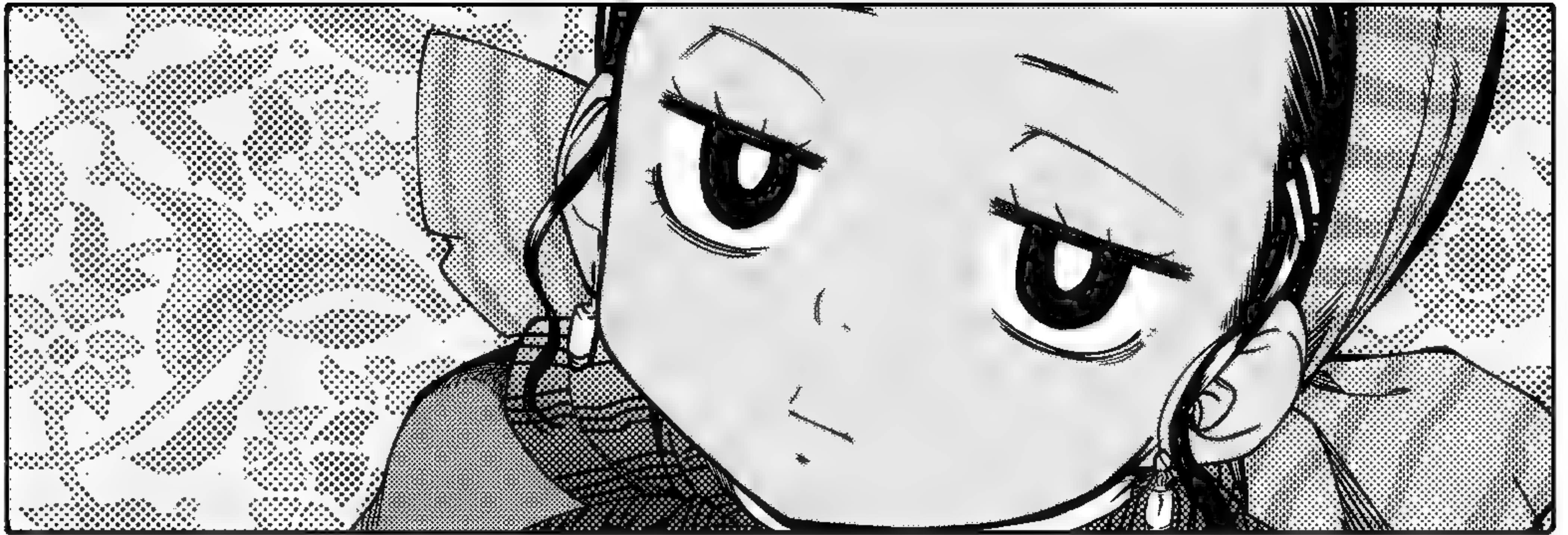




# The Kafna











"RACES OF THE  
ATLANTONAN  
CONTINENT."



"THE WAY  
AHEAD FOR  
THE SEVEN  
RACES."

*This one  
looks  
good.*

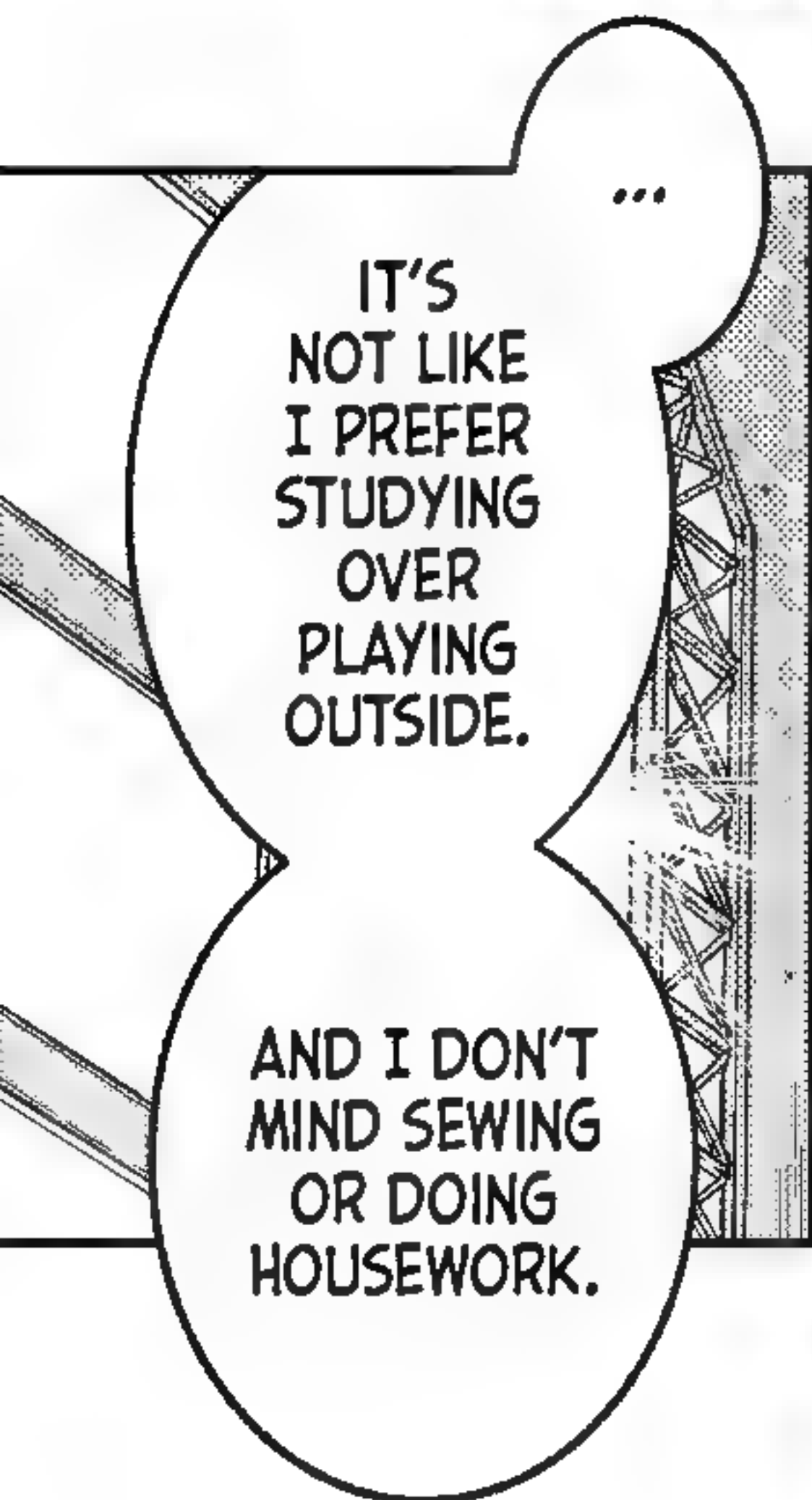


"HISTORY  
OF THE  
RAKTA  
PEOPLE."



I GUESS  
I AM ONE  
OF THE  
ONLY  
GIRLS,  
THOUGH.

DON'T  
PATRONIZE  
ME. I'M IN  
SCHOOL,  
YOU KNOW.



...  
IT'S  
NOT LIKE  
I PREFER  
STUDYING  
OVER  
PLAYING  
OUTSIDE.

AND I DON'T  
MIND SEWING  
OR DOING  
HOUSEWORK.



THIS  
MEANS I  
WON'T HAVE  
TO READ  
EVERYTHING  
ALoud.

YOU HAVE  
QUITE THE  
FATHER.

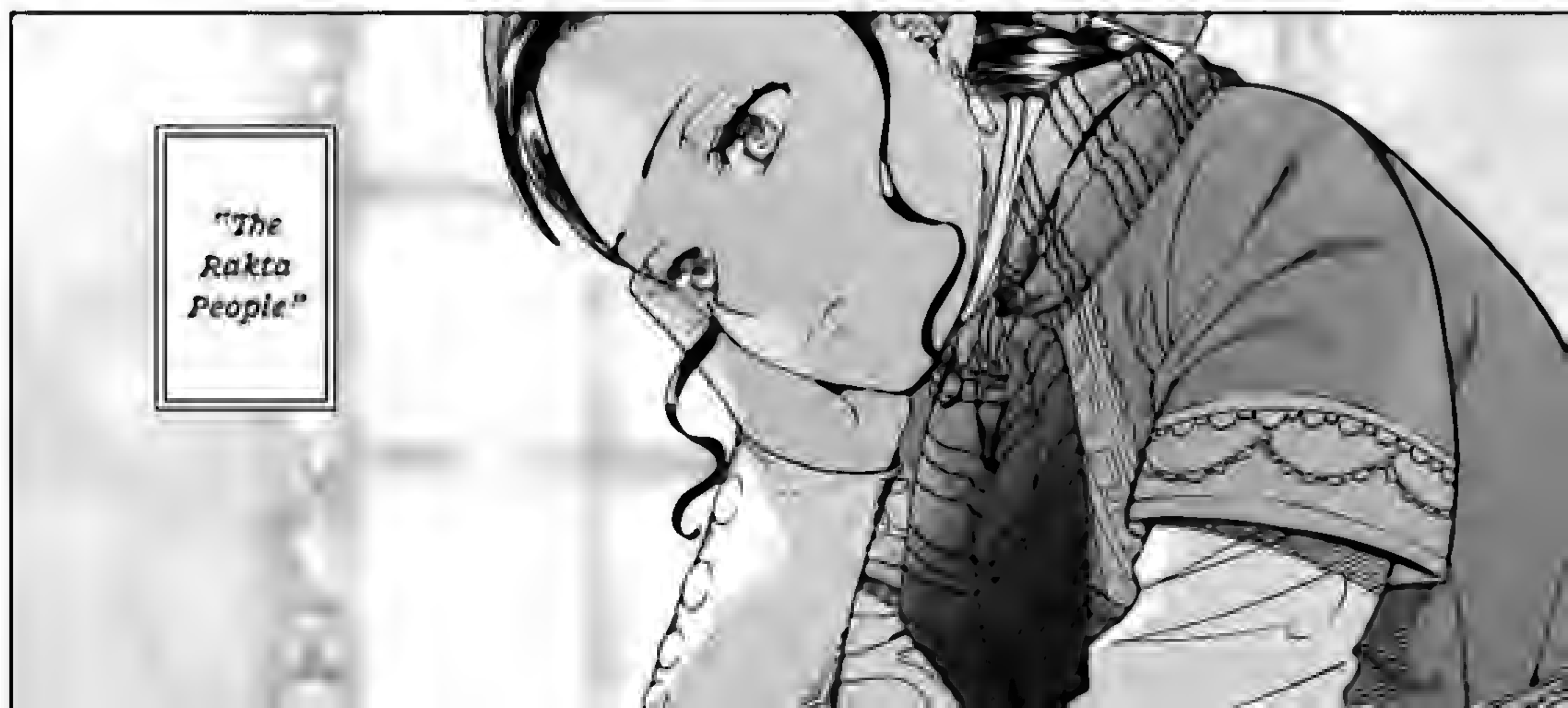
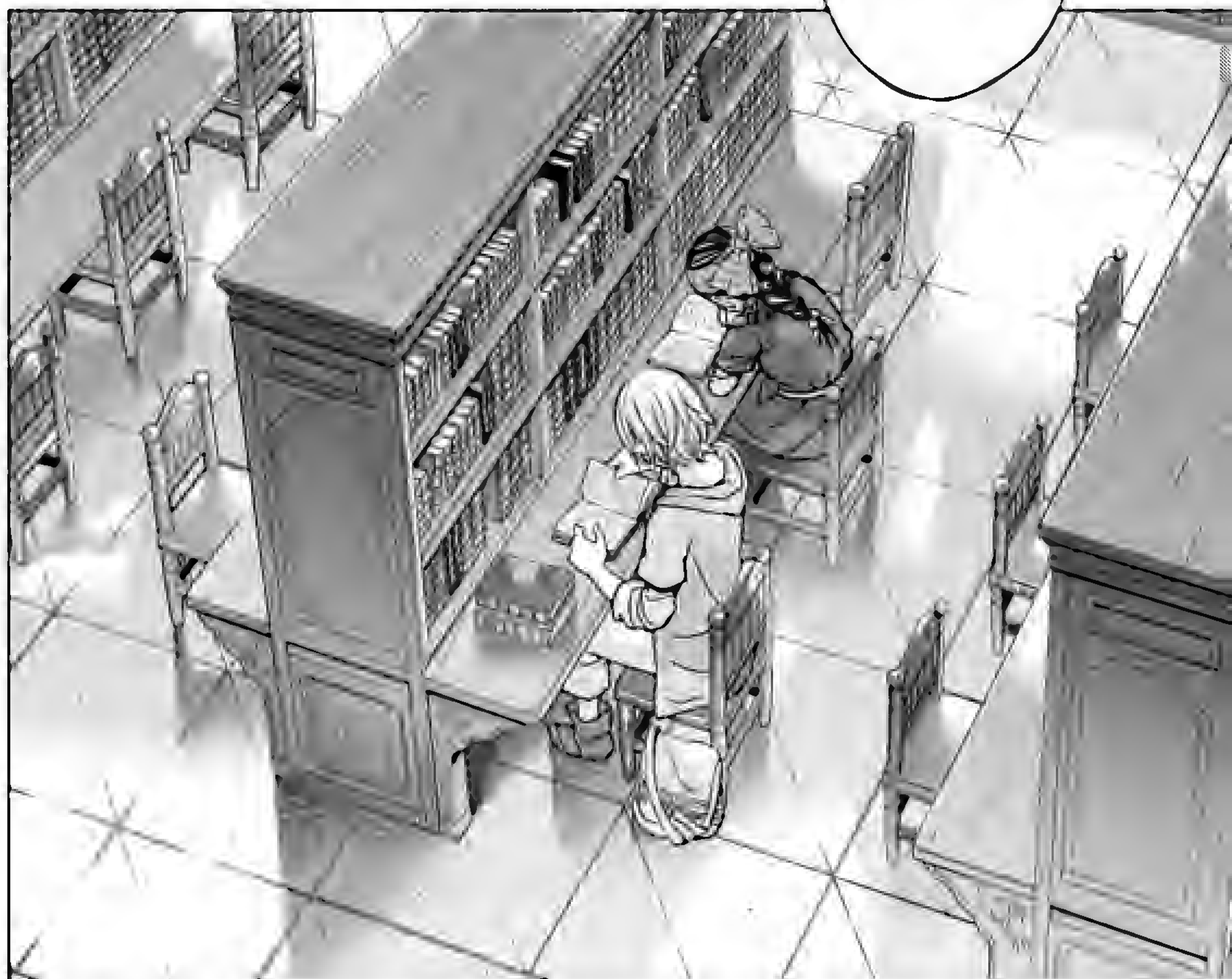


HEY!  
YOU CAN  
READ!



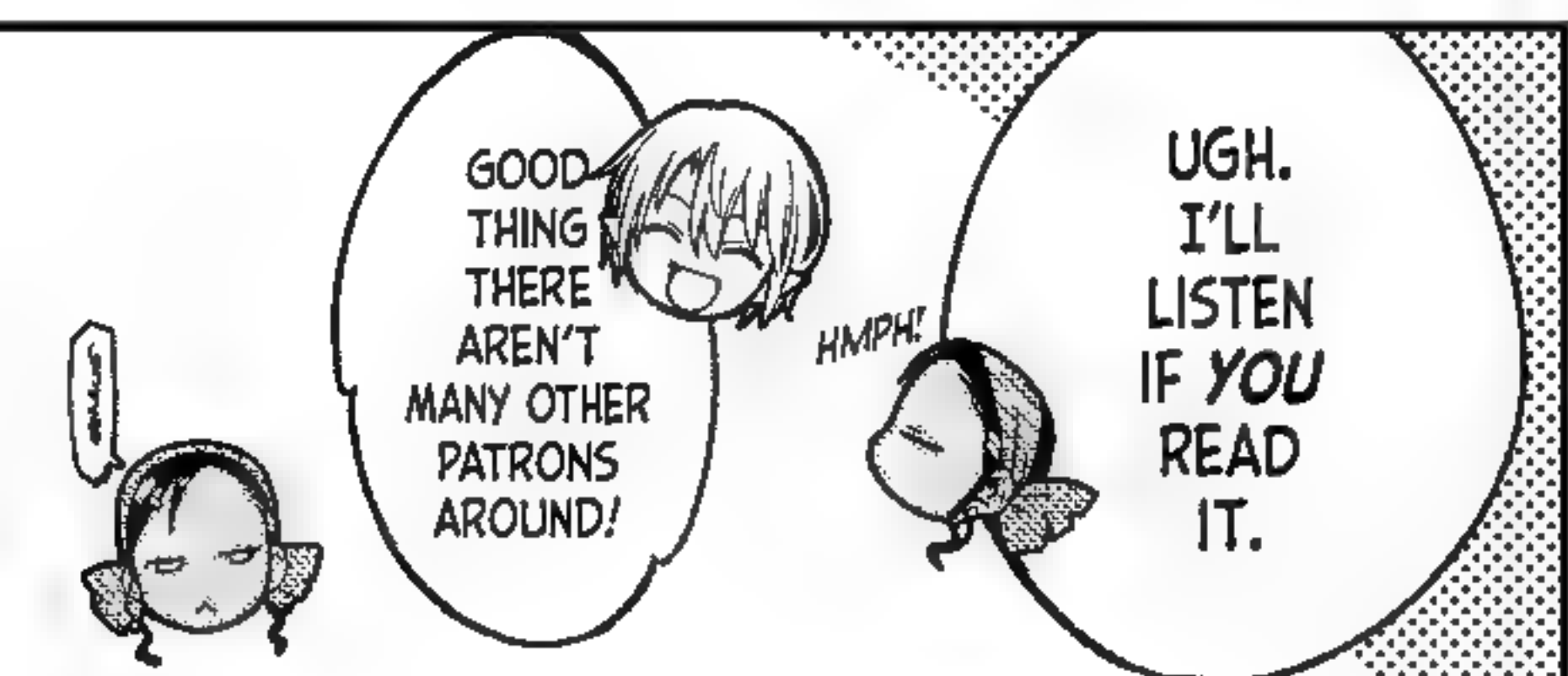
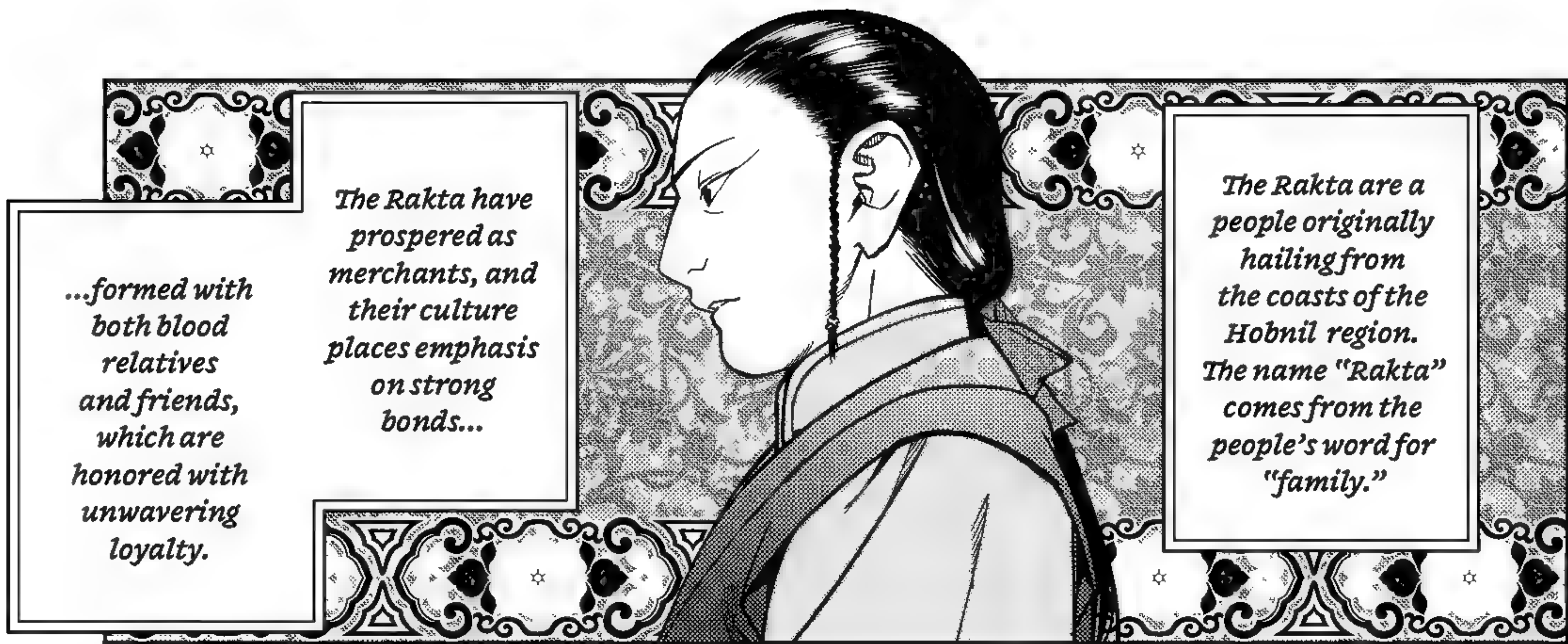


I DON'T NEED  
TO BE ABLE TO  
READ. I'D BE  
JUST FINE  
WITHOUT IT.

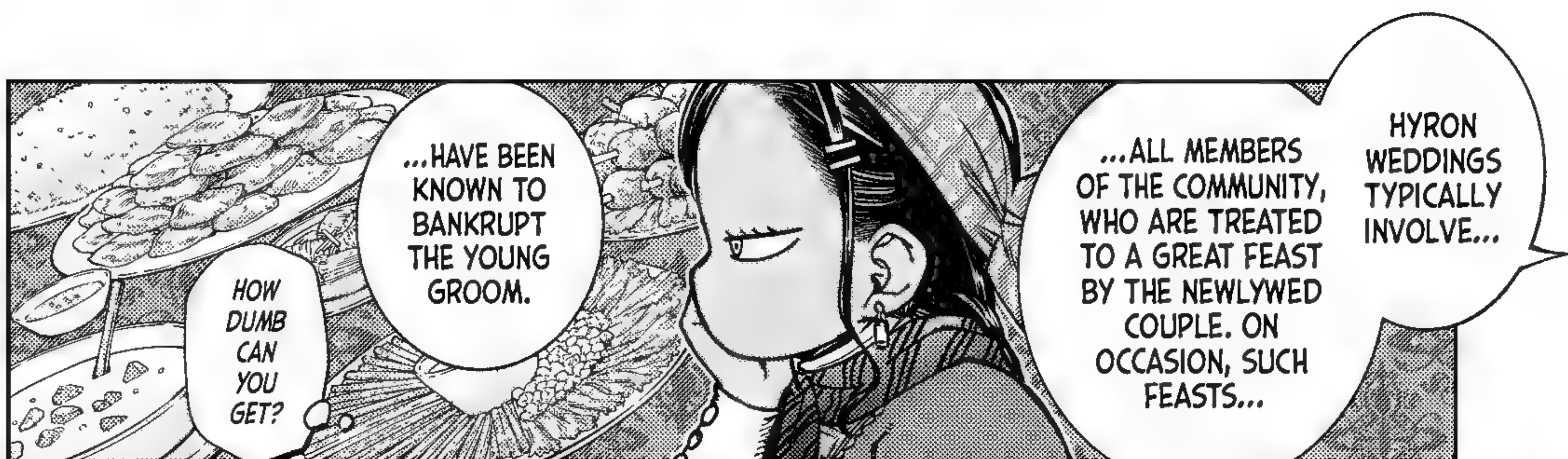


*"The  
Rakta  
People"*









HOW  
DUMB  
CAN  
YOU  
GET?

...HAVE BEEN  
KNOWN TO  
BANKRUPT  
THE YOUNG  
GROOM.

...ALL MEMBERS  
OF THE COMMUNITY,  
WHO ARE TREATED  
TO A GREAT FEAST  
BY THE NEWLYWED  
COUPLE. ON  
OCCASION, SUCH  
FEASTS...

HYRON  
WEDDINGS  
TYPICALLY  
INVOLVE...



WHY PLANT  
IT IN THE  
FIRST PLACE  
IF IT MIGHT  
WITHER?

IT IS  
SAID THAT  
UNHAPPINESS  
WILL VISIT  
THEM IF THE  
TREE WITHERS.

...THERE IS A  
TRADITION OF  
PLANTING A  
KAAJ TREE IN  
THE NEW  
COUPLE'S  
GARDEN.

AT HAUPI  
WEDDINGS  
...



THE  
GUESTS DANCE  
TOGETHER WITH  
THE NEWLYWED  
COUPLE WHILE  
THROWING  
PETALS FROM  
THE SCARLET  
MULBERRY INTO  
THE AIR.

AH. RAKTA  
WEDDINGS.

WHAT'S  
THE  
POINT  
OF  
THAT  
?!

GUESTS  
AT KADOE  
WEDDINGS  
TRADITIONALLY  
POUR BLACK INK  
ON THE BRIDE  
UNTIL SHE IS  
COMPLETELY  
COVERED.



...AND THE  
LEAVES ARE  
FAVORED BY  
SILKWORMS.  
THUS,  
THE RAKTA  
VIEW THE  
TREE AS A  
SYMBOL OF  
PROSPERITY.

THE  
TRADITION  
OF DANCING  
WITH THE  
PETALS  
BEGAN AS A  
WAY TO PRAY  
FOR THE NEW  
COUPLE'S  
SUCCESS.

THE TREE'S  
SLIGHTLY-  
TRANSLUCENT  
PETALS  
ARE A  
VIBRANT  
RED...

HIS VOICE PUTS  
ME AT EASE...

...AND DRAWS  
ME IN...

...  
PETALS,  
HUH  
?

THERE'S SOMETHING  
ABOUT...

...THE WAY HE READS.





AN ETHEREAL AMBIENCE...  
...OF FLUTTERING RED  
BLOSSOMS...

SHIMMER



THE  
FLUTTERING  
SCARLET  
BLOSSOMS  
CREATE AN  
ETHEREAL  
AMBIENCE,  
UNDER WHICH  
A DANCE  
CONSISTING  
OF...



GAASP





THEY  
OFTEN  
SEEM  
STRANGE  
TO  
OUTSIDERS  
LOOKING  
IN...

CULTURES  
AND  
CUSTOMS  
ARE ALWAYS  
EVOLVING  
WITH THE  
PASSAGE  
OF TIME.



THE  
HAUPI TREES  
PROVIDE  
A USEFUL  
HOUSEHOLD  
ANTISEPTIC.

THE  
HYRON  
FEASTS  
ENSURE NO  
ONE IN THE  
VILLAGE  
GOES  
HUNGRY.

SHAKE  
SHAKE

THE KADOE  
HOPE THAT  
THEIR INK  
WILL KEEP  
EVIL SPIRITS  
FROM  
NOTICING  
THE BRIDE.



...IS ROOTED  
IN CONCERN  
TOWARD THE  
PEOPLE AND  
THINGS WE  
CARE ABOUT.



...BUT I  
SUSPECT  
EACH AND  
EVERY  
ONE...



I CAN'T  
BELIEVE  
THIS.



HE MADE  
ME CHECK  
OUT THE  
BOOK.



DIING

DIING

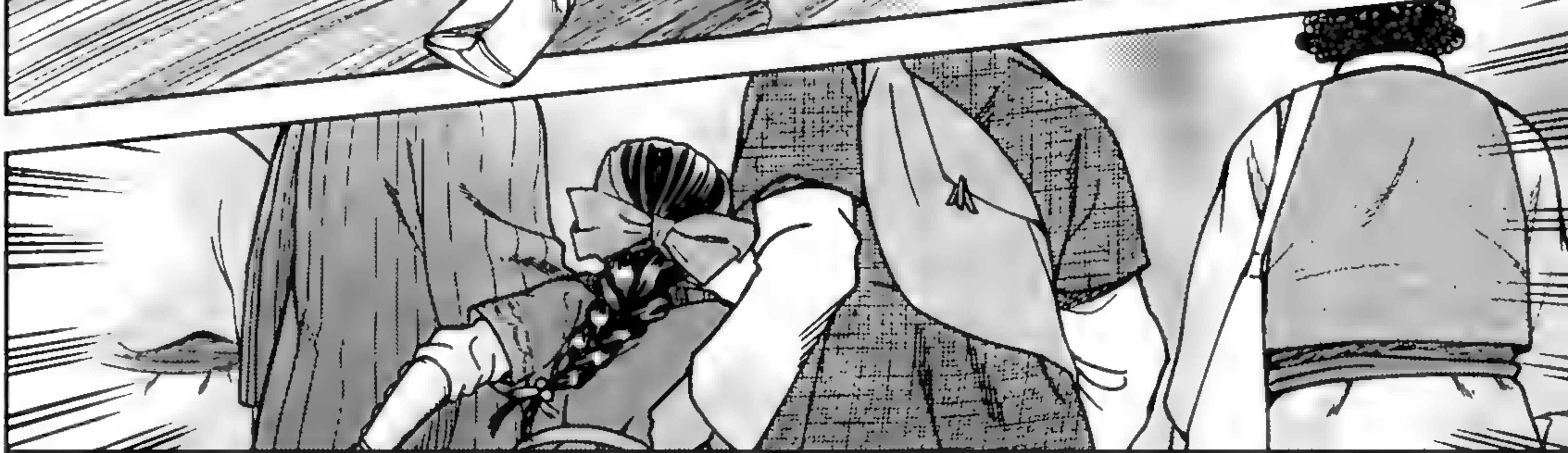








CHAAK  
?!

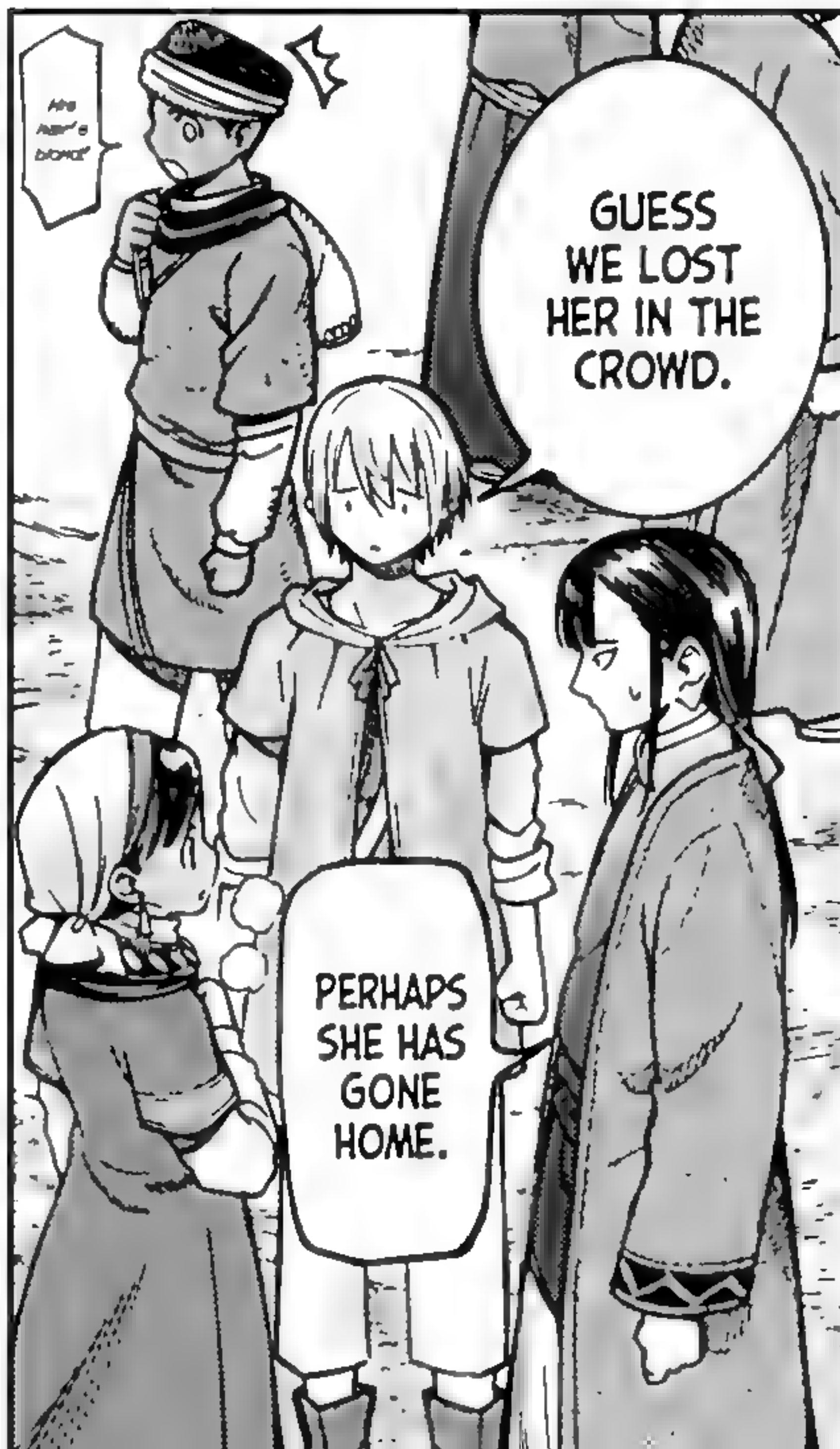


CHAAK  
TENDS TO  
GET HER-  
SELF IN  
TROUBLE

THIS  
DOESN'T  
SIT WELL  
WITH ME.

It's  
fine!  
Hope  
we find  
her  
soon.

I  
know  
not who  
you are,  
but  
I thank  
you for  
your  
help.



GUESS  
WE LOST  
HER IN THE  
CROWD.

PERHAPS  
SHE HAS  
GONE  
HOME.

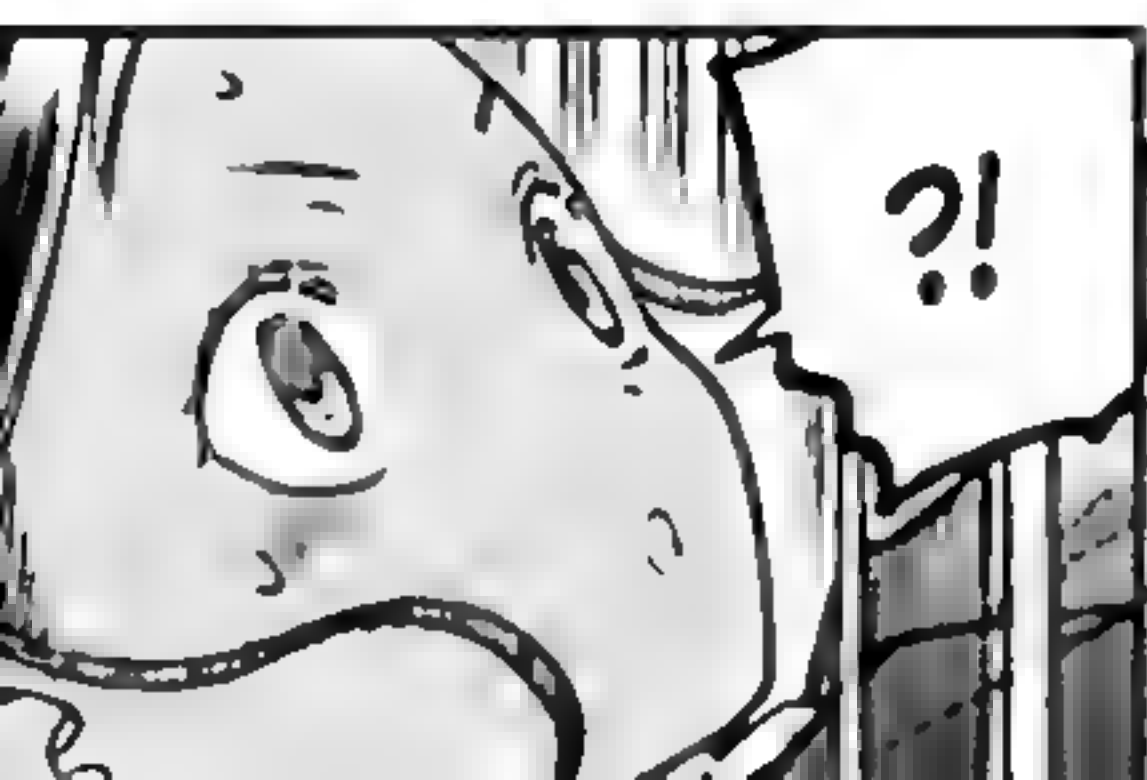
We  
have  
lost  
her!



DID  
YOU  
FIND  
HER  
?!

NO!  
SHE'S  
GONE  
!













I SHALL  
GO AND  
SAVE H-

THE  
GIRL IS  
FAMILY  
TO ME!

RELEASE  
YOUR  
HANDS  
!

STOP!  
YOU'LL  
GET  
WASHED  
AWAY,  
TOO!

IF SHE  
REACHES  
THE END  
OF  
TOWN,  
SHE'LL  
...!!

KRSH

KRSH

KRSH

KRSH

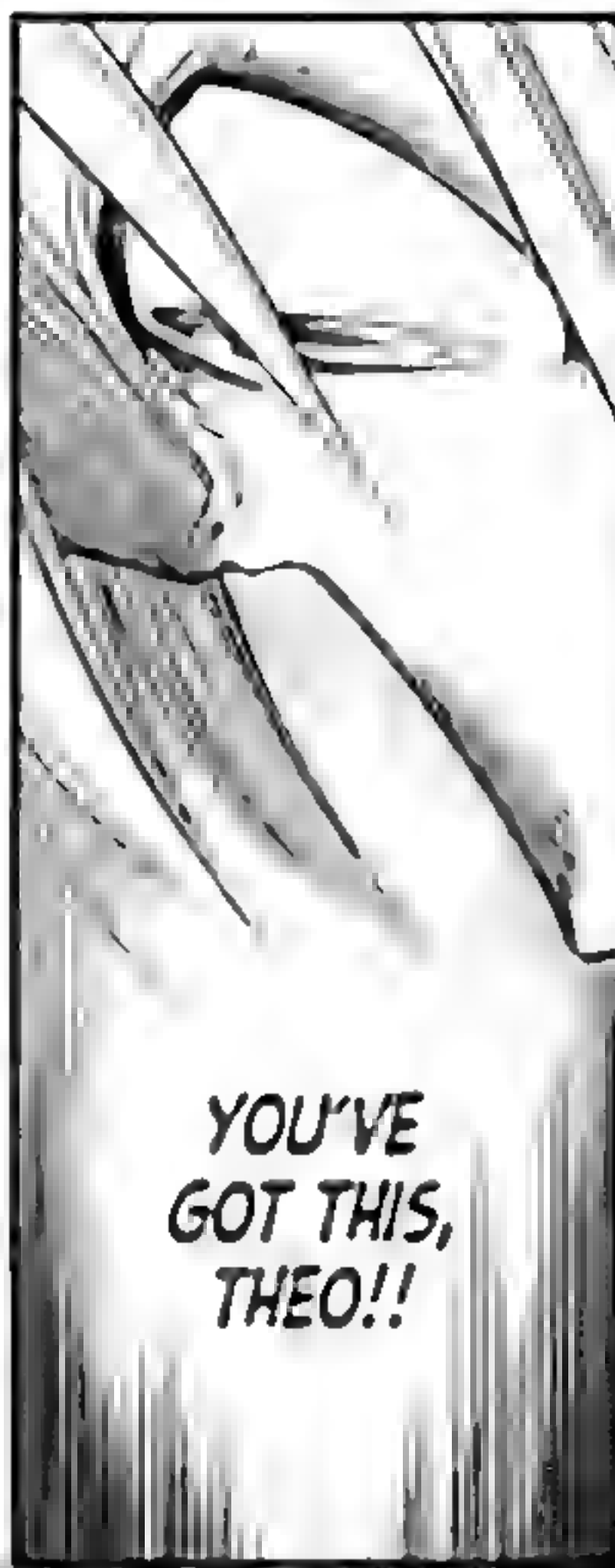
KRSH





THE ONLY PATH  
FORWARD...

...IS THE ONE YOU MAKE  
WITH YOUR OWN HANDS!!



YOU'VE  
GOT THIS,  
THEO!!



I DON'T  
KNOW IF  
THIS'LL  
WORK...

...BUT  
I HAVE  
TO TRY!

I'M SORRY.



AND  
WITHOUT  
YOU  
NEAR  
ME...

...I'D  
FEEL SO  
ALONE...



...BECAUSE THE DAY  
YOU WED IS THE DAY  
YOU LEAVE HOME.

WE'D BE  
APART.



FLANGE

I WAS JUST  
GRASPING AT  
ANY REASON  
I COULD  
FIND...

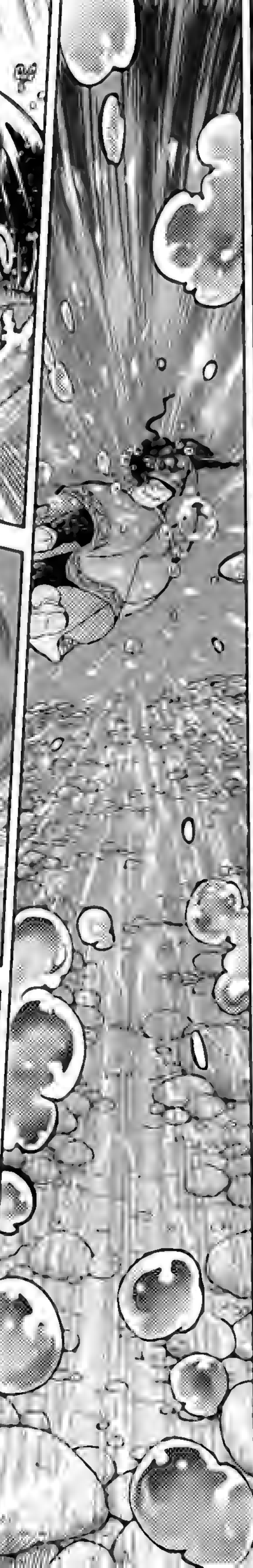


IN THE END,  
I WOULD'VE  
BEEN...

...HAPPY FOR YOU  
NO MATTER WHO  
YOU CHOSE.

HE'S THE MAN  
YOU LOVE.





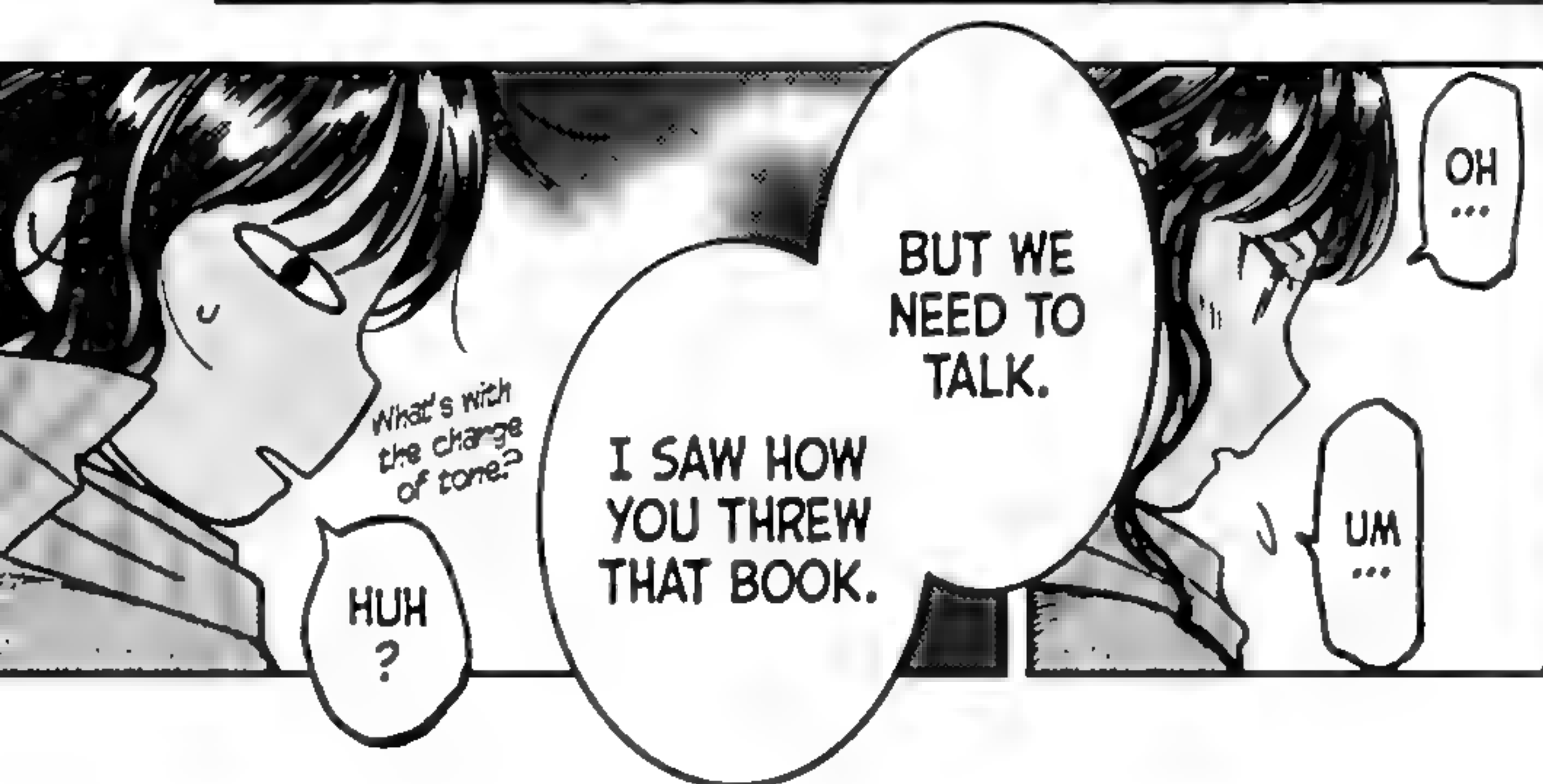
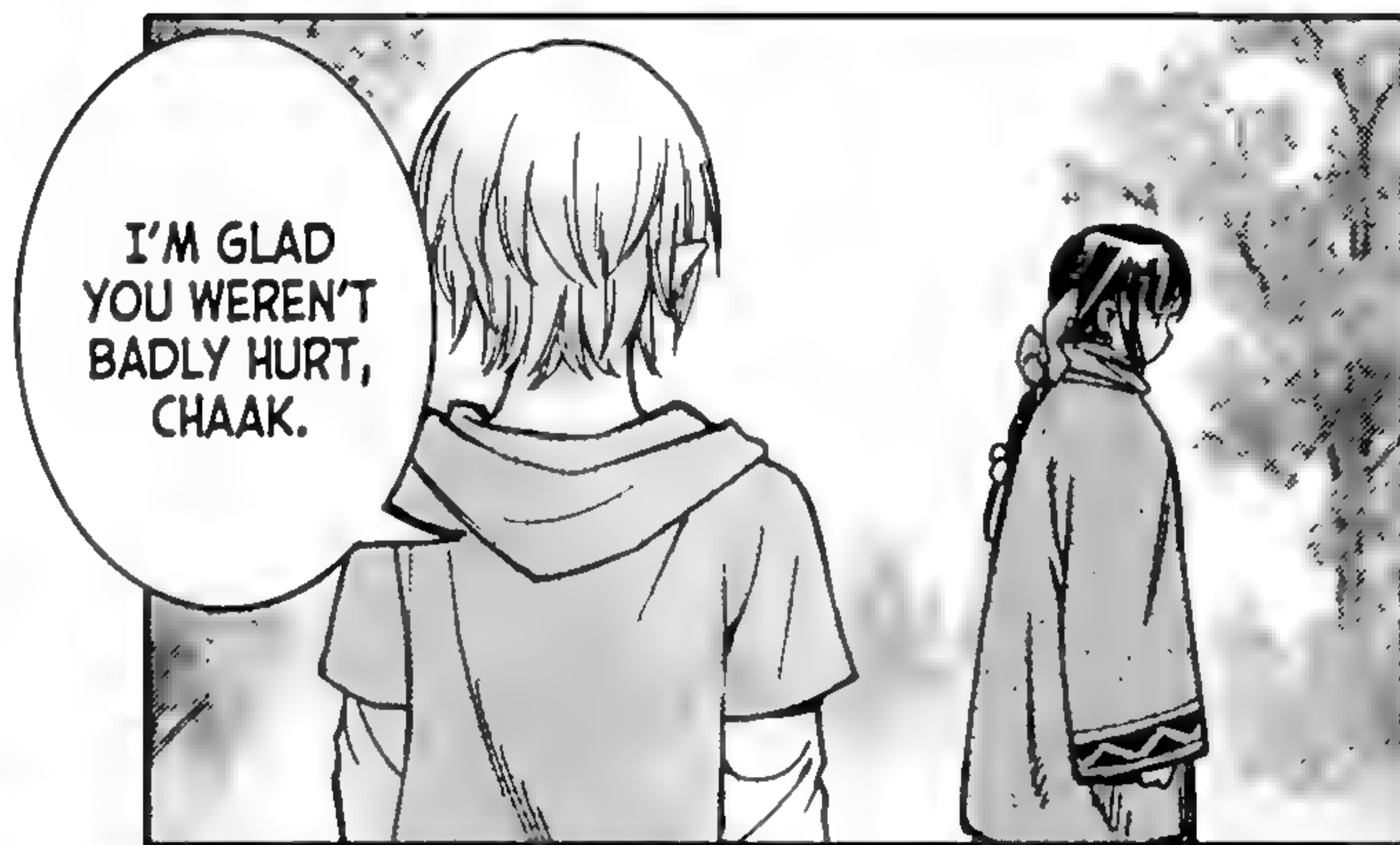
















...THROW  
A BOOK.

NEVER  
...

EVER  
...

GLARE

ゴッ

ゴッ

I'M  
SORRY  
...!

I'M...



IF YOU  
SHY AWAY  
FROM THE  
WORLD IT  
OFFERS...

...BECAUSE  
IT SEEMS  
NEW AND  
STRANGE,  
YOU'RE  
MISSING  
OUT.



CHAAK.

EVERY  
BOOK  
OFFERS A  
JOURNEY.



HERE.  
TAKE IT.



ANY  
TIME YOU  
DECIDE  
TO  
EMBARK  
ON A  
JOURNEY  
...



...THEY  
START TO  
SHINE WITH  
BEAUTY.

BUT  
IF WE LET  
OURSELVES  
GRADUALLY  
GET TO  
KNOW THOSE  
UNFAMILIAR  
THINGS...



LIVING  
THINGS  
LIKE YOU  
AND ME  
ARE  
BUILT TO  
FEAR THE  
UNKNOWN.

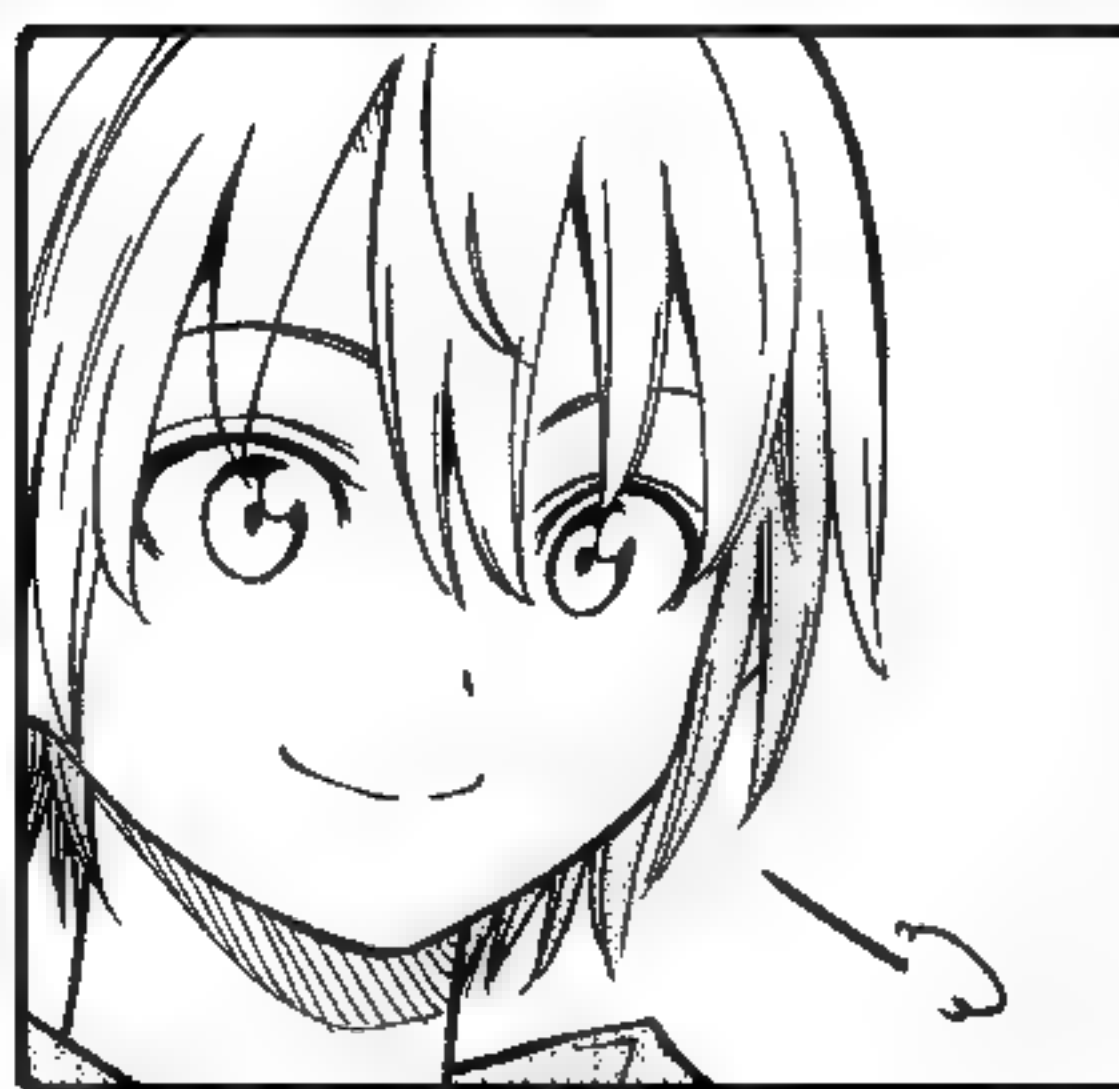




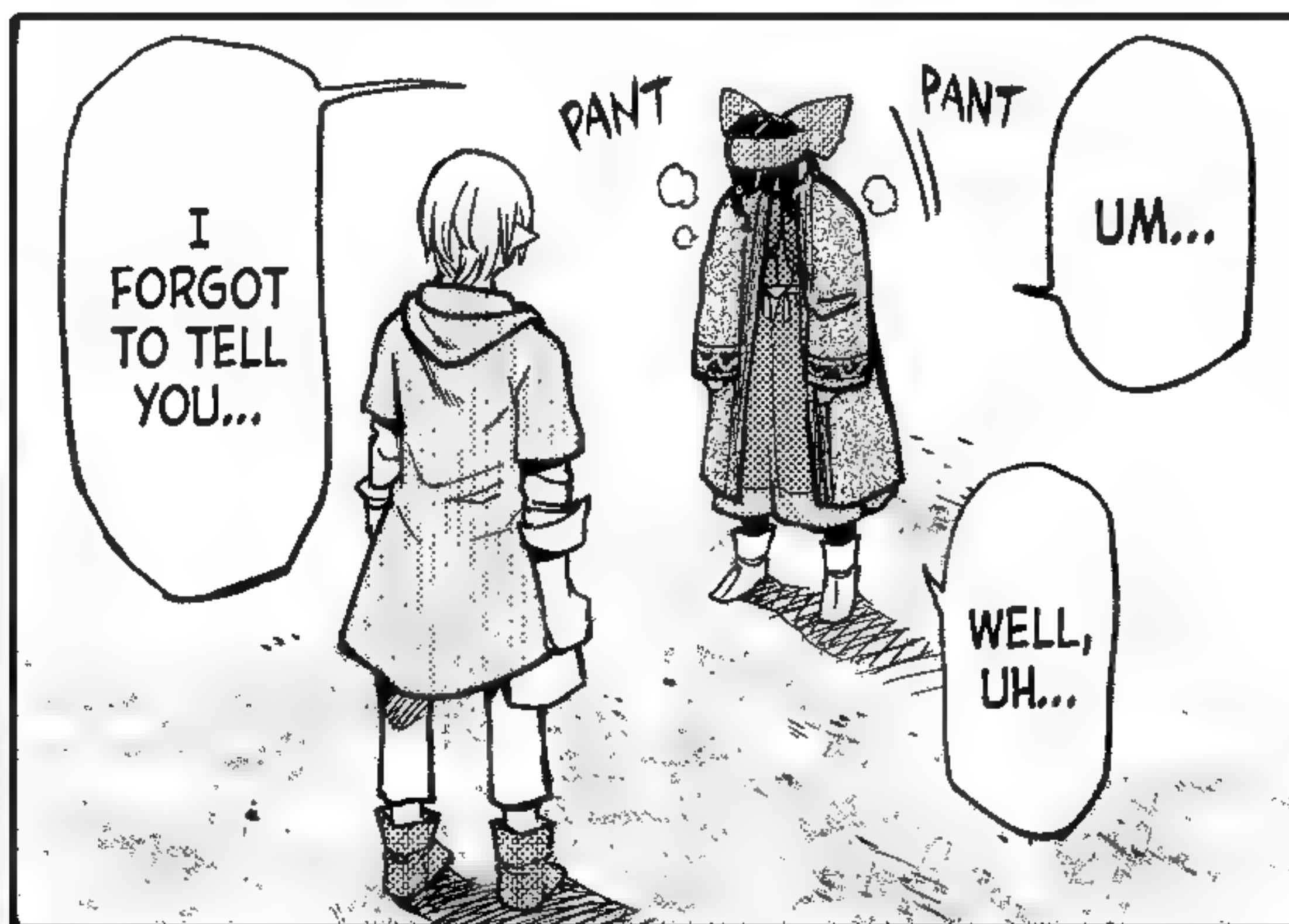
KNOW  
THAT THE  
LIBRARY...

...WILL  
ALWAYS  
BE THERE  
FOR YOU.













MAKES  
'EM  
PRETTY  
GREAT,  
DON'T  
YOU  
THINK?



YEAH!  
THEY'RE  
GREAT.

YEAH...



*Books  
only  
provide  
the  
oppor-  
tunity.*

*THANK  
YOU!*

*PEH*

*...is  
some-  
thing  
only  
time  
will  
tell.*

*Whether  
or not two  
souls learn  
to get  
along...*

*PEH*

*As  
the boy  
rode off,  
he offered  
a silent  
prayer.*

*"Please..."*

*"...the  
beautiful  
wedding  
that  
they  
deserve."*

*"...see  
that their  
family  
enjoys..."*













الطريق  
*Sights on the Road*

### The Great Fossil of Ah Tabai

In the distant past, there were several islands that would one day converge to become the Atlatonan Continent. Between them stretched a sea rife with massive aquatic beasts known as **Thalassaurs**. This fossil is thought to be a remnant of one such beast, left stranded as a series of cataclysms altered the seascape and eventually drew the islands together.





This valley is said to have formed long ago, when Atlatonan, the mother goddess of the earth, laid herself down to rest. Its name comes from the legend of the messenger Sh'osh Mitol, of the Hydiah, who traversed the valley in a single day—with an enemy's arrow still lodged in his leg—in order to warn his people of danger.





THE ASHEN DEATH

RAKTA  
AUTONOMOUS  
REGION

Atlatonan  
Continent  
Hyron  
Autonomous  
Region

KHAMASA  
TOWN OF THE  
WATERFALLS

AMUN  
VILLAGE OF THE  
GREAT TREE

HYRON  
AUTONOMOUS  
REGION

The youth  
ventured forth  
from the only  
village he'd ever  
known, bearing  
south toward  
Aftzaak.

One day,  
in a crucial  
moment, he  
would shine  
upon history's  
stage...

...but that  
day was  
yet to  
come.

For now,  
he was  
merely a boy  
hoping to  
become a  
kafna.

How  
are you  
holding  
up?

6

Two Book Bandits and a  
Girl Who Can't Get it Right





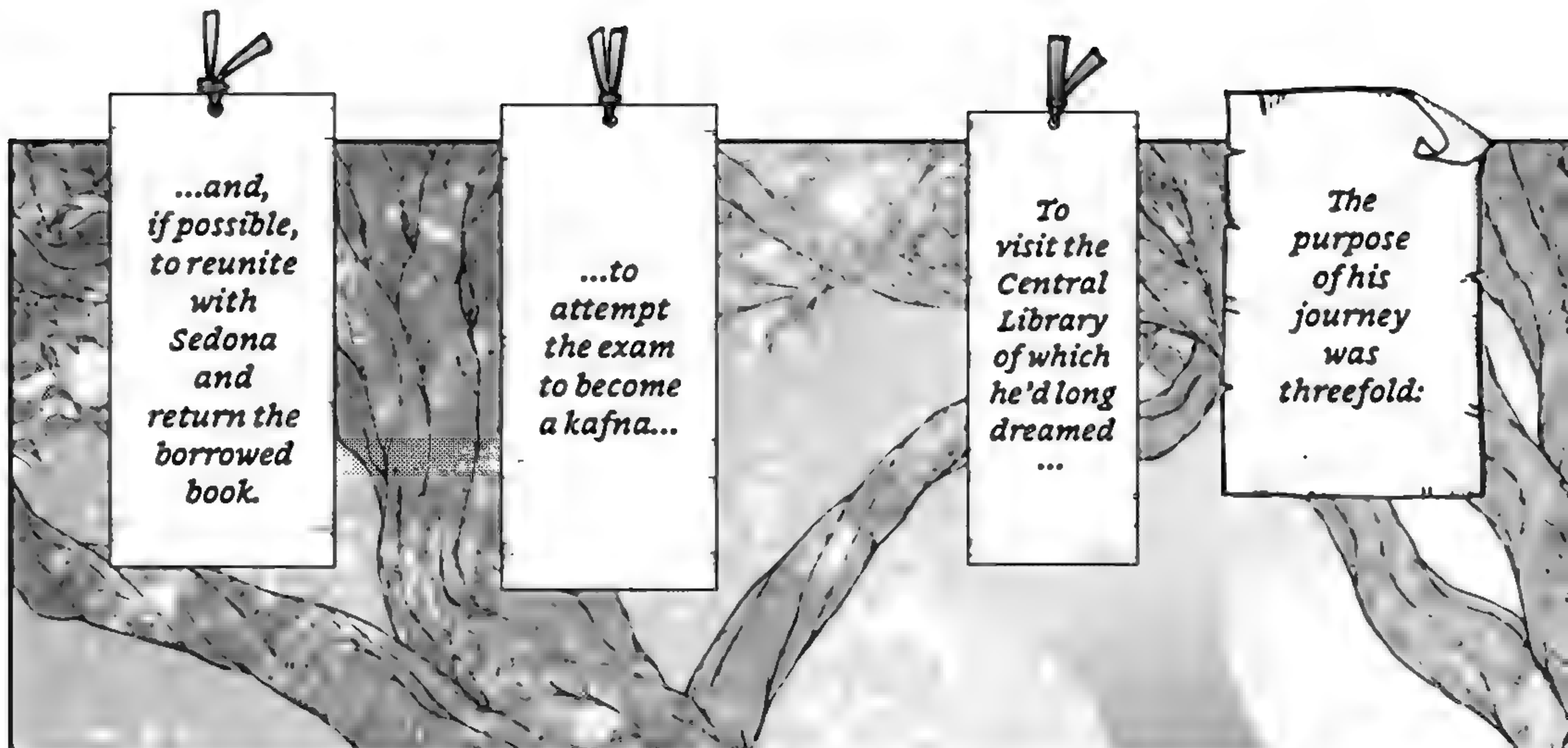
THE EQUEKO RAVINE



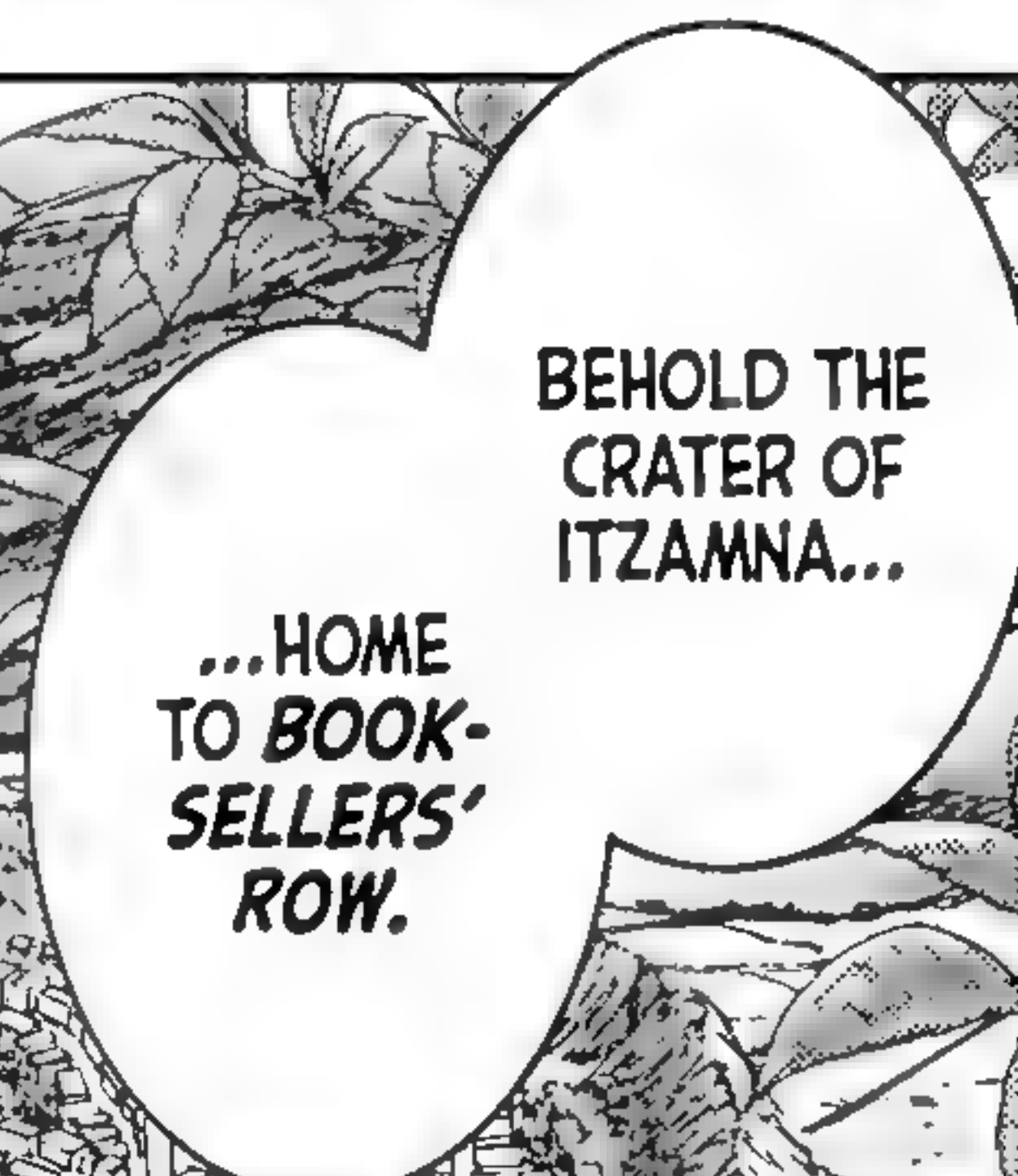
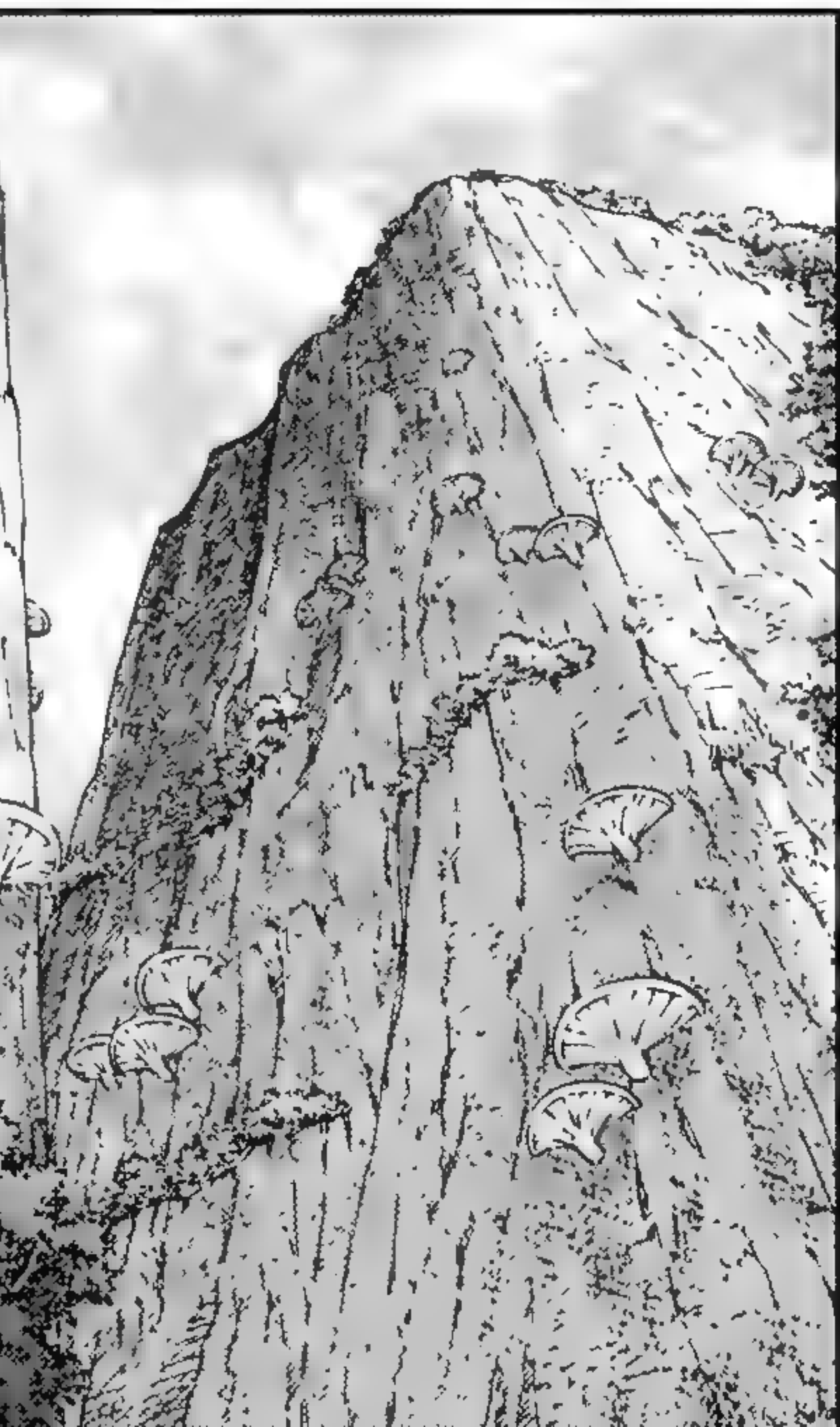
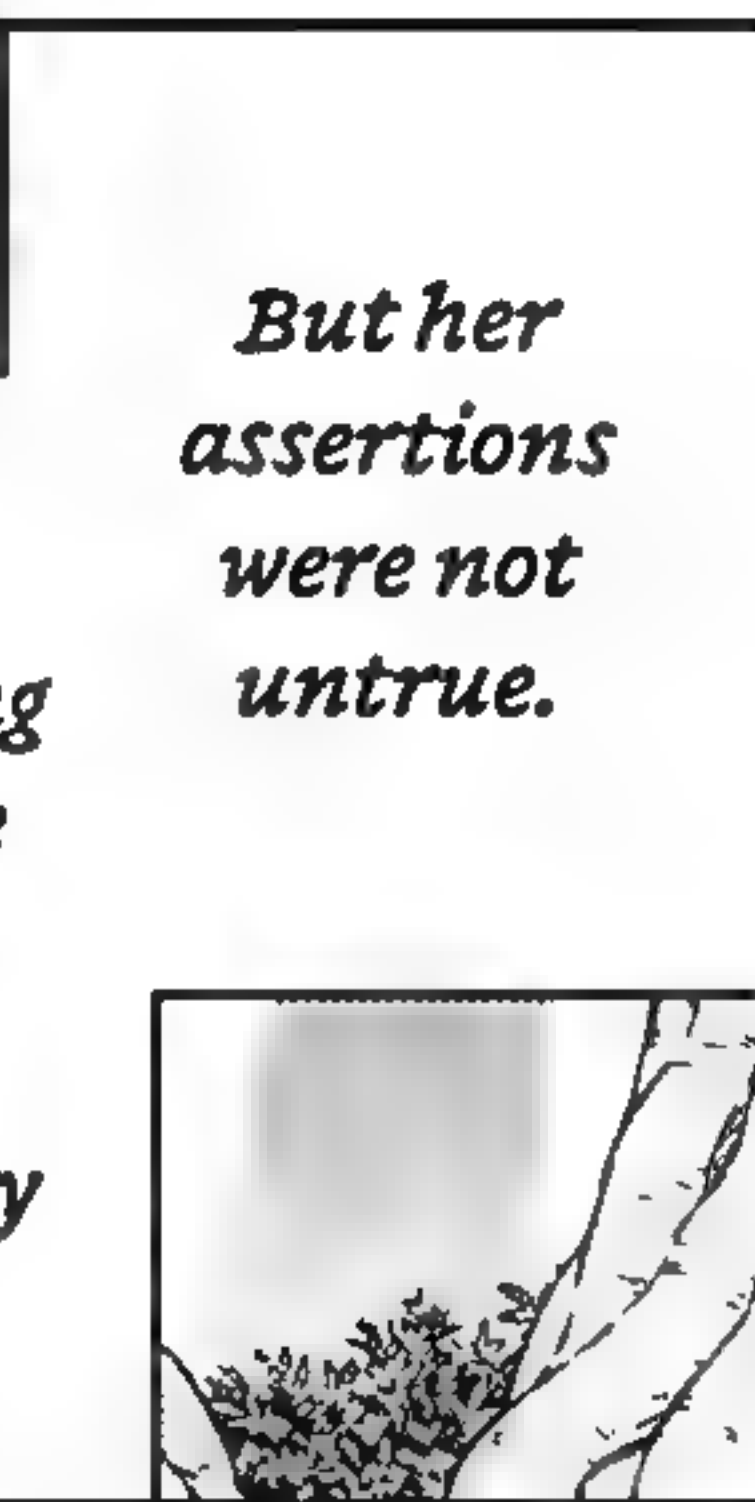
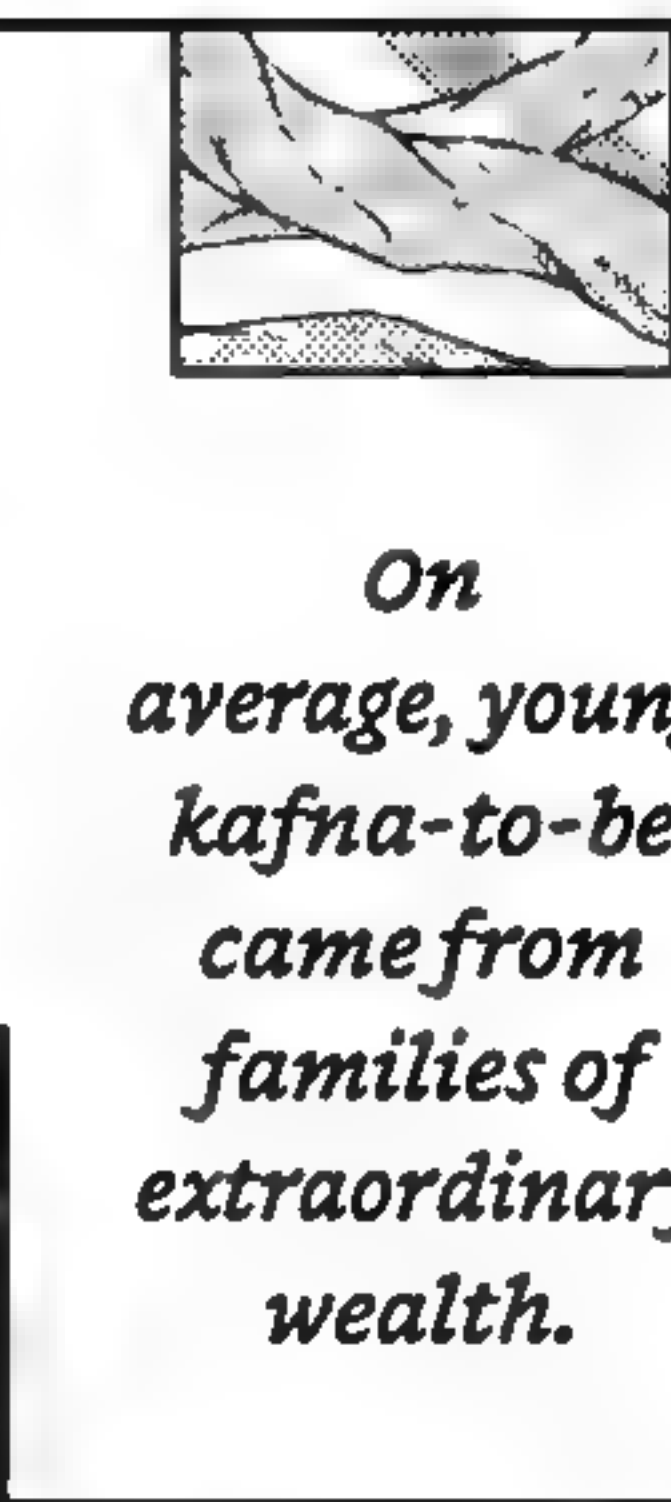
THE AH CANGUM TRAILWAY
















WHAT  
KIND OF  
SUSPICIOUS  
LOT ARE  
YOU?!

HALT!




ARE A  
COUPLE OF  
TRAVELERS  
REALLY SO  
UNUSUAL?

THIS  
IS A HUB  
OF TRADE,  
AIN'T IT?  
ALL KINDS  
OF GOODS  
MOVING IN  
AND OUT.



YOU IN  
BACK!  
WHAT  
RACE DO  
YOU HAIL  
FROM?



WE'VE HAD  
A SPATE OF  
BANDITS  
SNEAKING  
INTO TOWN  
UNDER THE  
GUISE OF  
MERCHANTS.

A HUB,  
INDEED!  
THAT'S WHY  
IT NEEDS  
TO BE  
PATROLLED!

HEY,  
NOW.  
NOTHIN'  
BUT  
TRUE-BLUE  
HYRON  
HERE.



YES,  
SIR!



LISTEN  
HERE,  
YOU  
BLOND  
FLUKE.



AND LET  
ME SAY,  
YOU'RE  
DOING  
A FINE  
JOB OUT  
HERE!

I'LL LET  
YOU IN,  
BUT IF I  
CATCH YOU  
MAKING  
TROUBLE,  
SO HELP  
ME...!



WOOOW!!



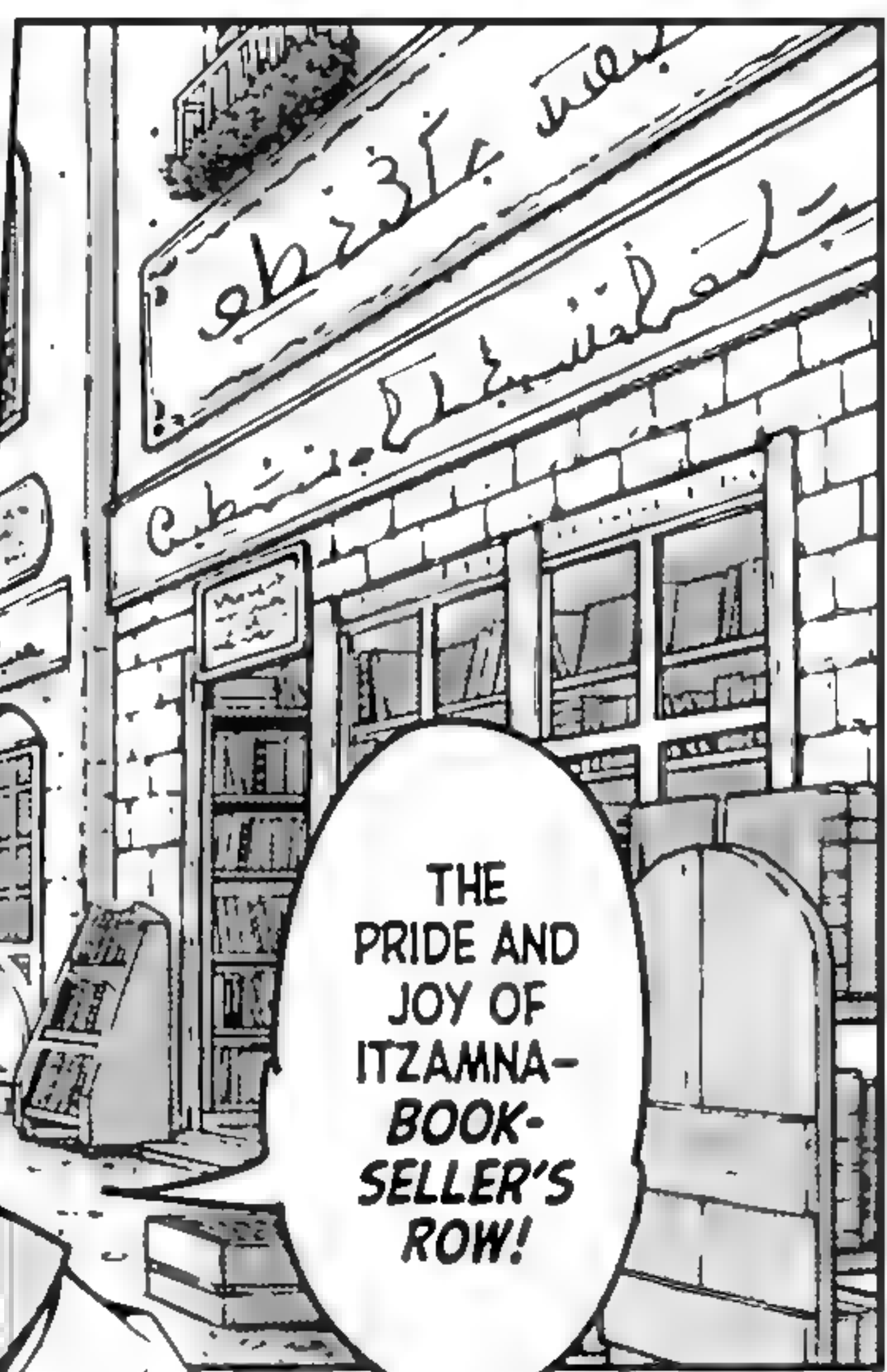
Itzamna  
City in the Crater



A WHOLE  
AVENUE  
LINED  
ENTIRELY  
WITH  
BOOK-  
STORES!



THE  
PRIDE AND  
JOY OF  
ITZAMNA-  
BOOK-  
SELLER'S  
ROW!



WHY IS THIS  
KID?  
MOTHER  
HE'S  
BORN!  
WHY  
FACE IS  
THIS?





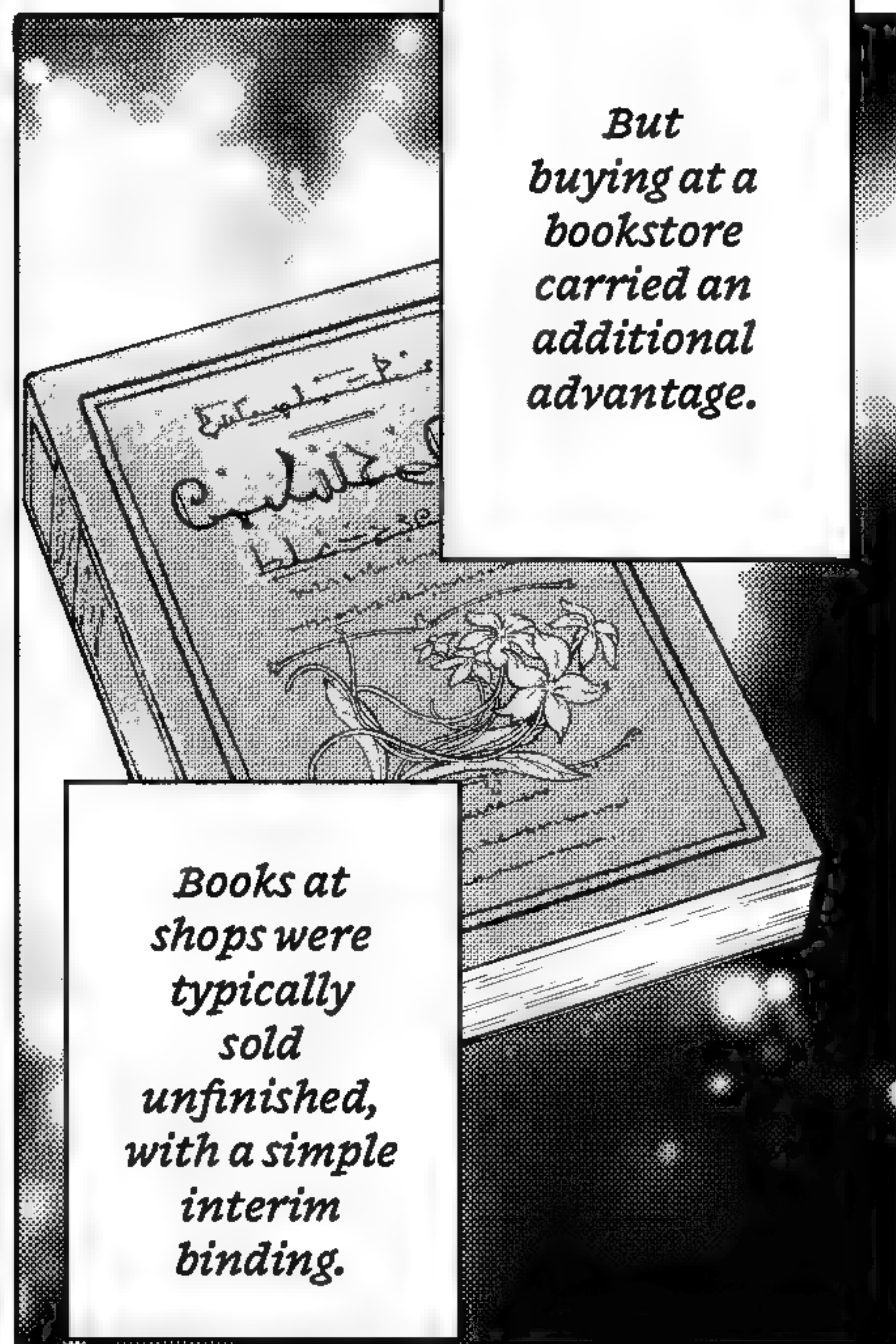




Popular book-binders didn't come cheap

Buyers could properly bind the book on their own or through the services of a bookbinder.

It was a special joy of book ownership that could never be experienced with a library loan.

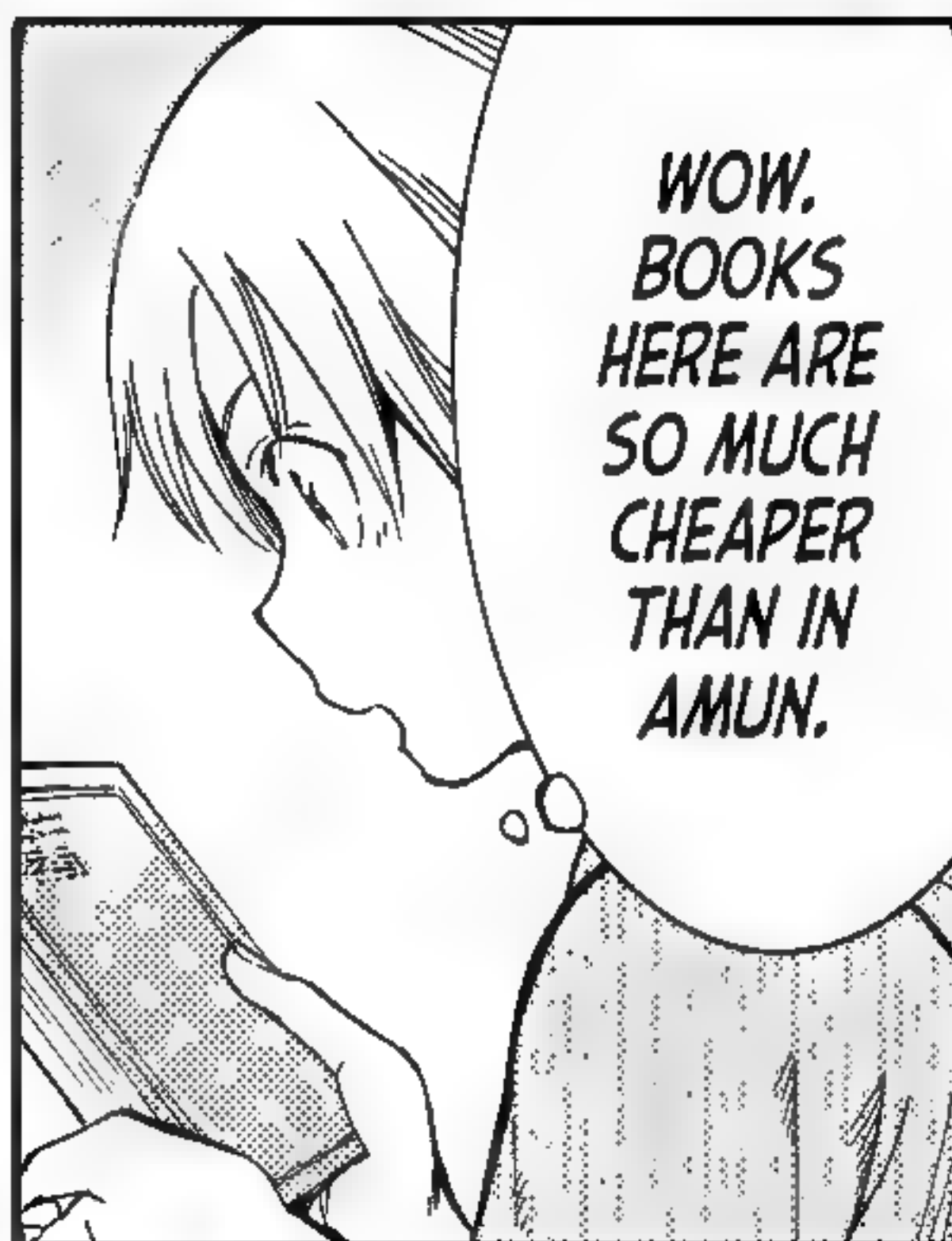


But buying at a bookstore carried an additional advantage.

Books at shops were typically sold unfinished, with a simple interim binding.



OH!  
OF COURSE!  
WITH SO MANY  
SALES, IT'S  
EASIER TO  
RECOUP THE  
TIME AND  
MONEY  
SPENT ON  
DISTRIBUTION!



WOW.  
BOOKS  
HERE ARE  
SO MUCH  
CHEAPER  
THAN IN  
AMUN.

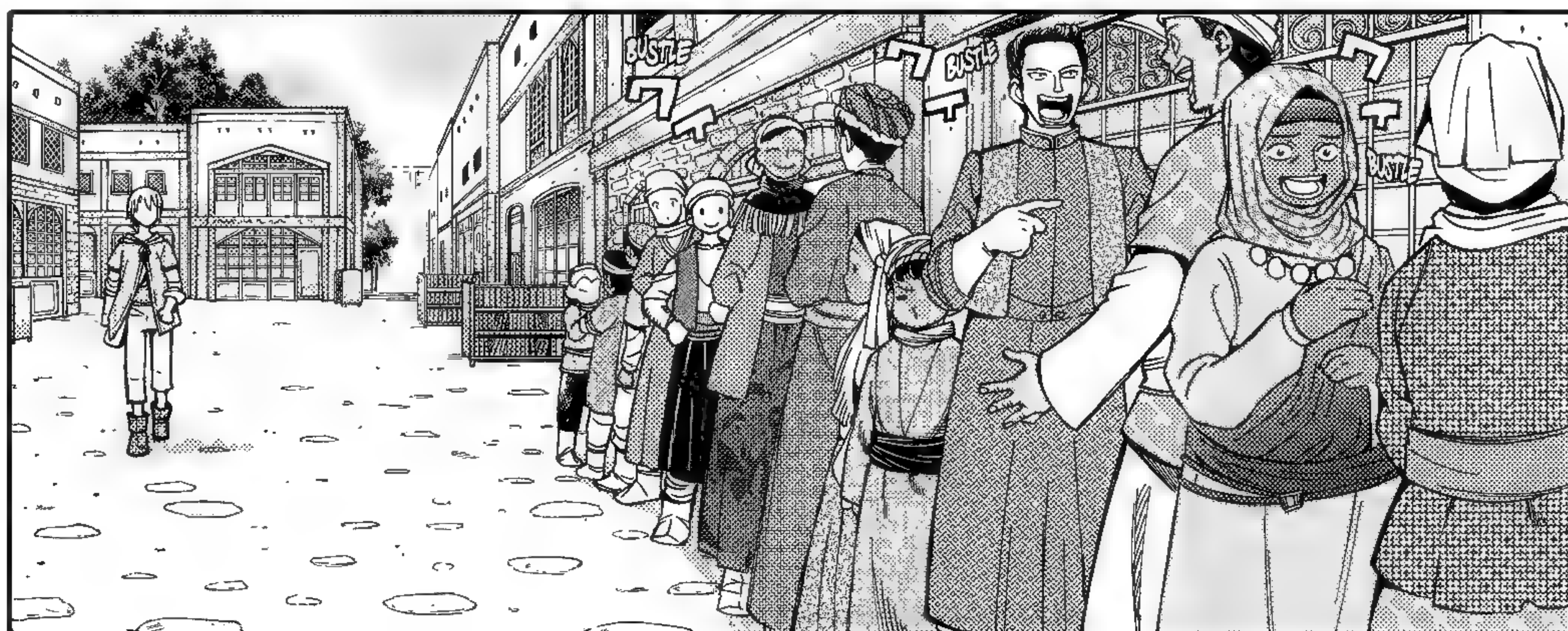


AND  
SOMEDAY  
FILL UP A  
BOOKSHELF  
OF MY VERY  
OWN!

...GIVE  
MY SISTER  
A COM-  
FORTABLE  
LIFE...

I'M  
GONNA  
WORK  
EXTRA  
HARD...

Hey,  
I can  
dream,  
right?







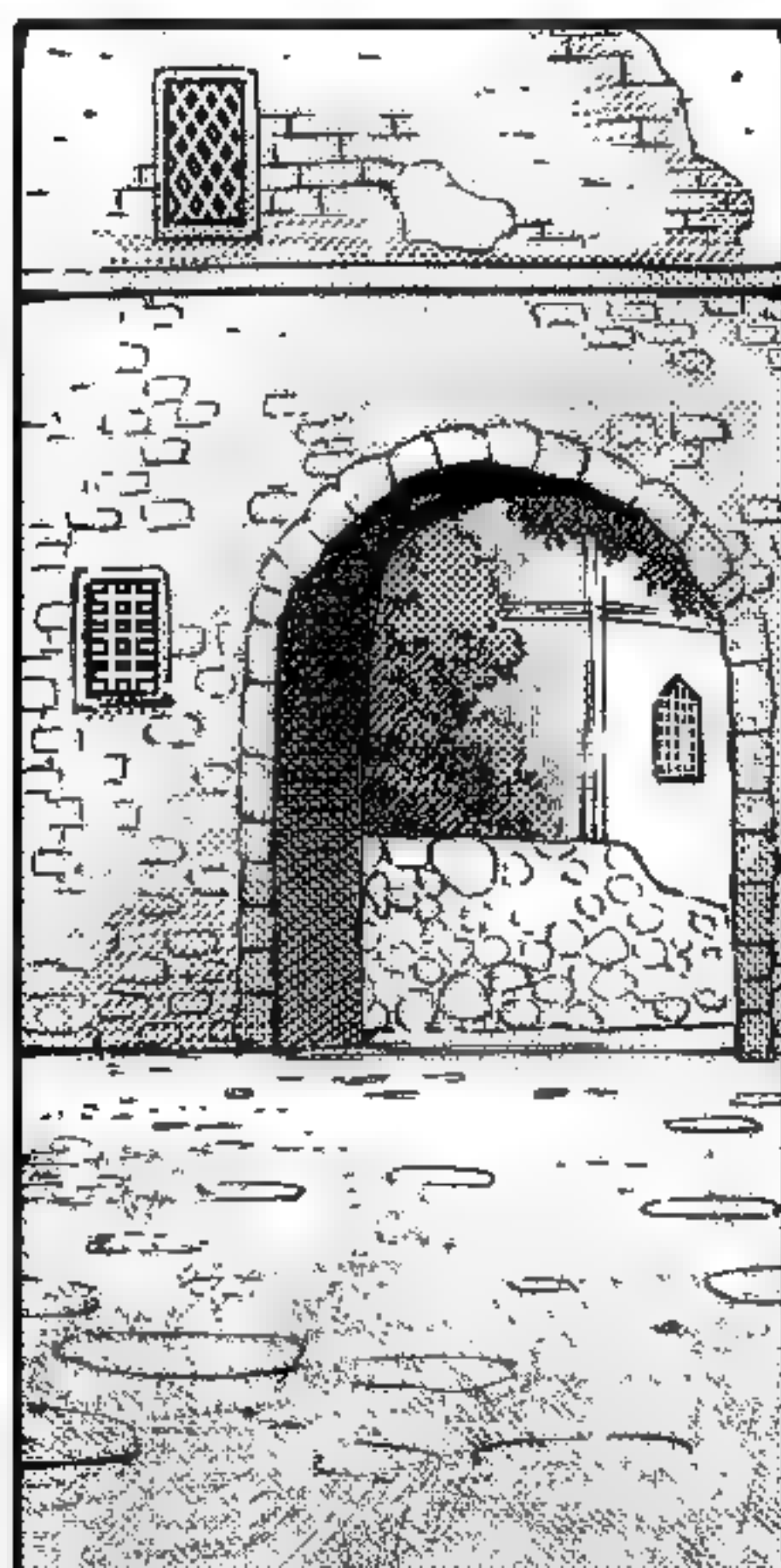
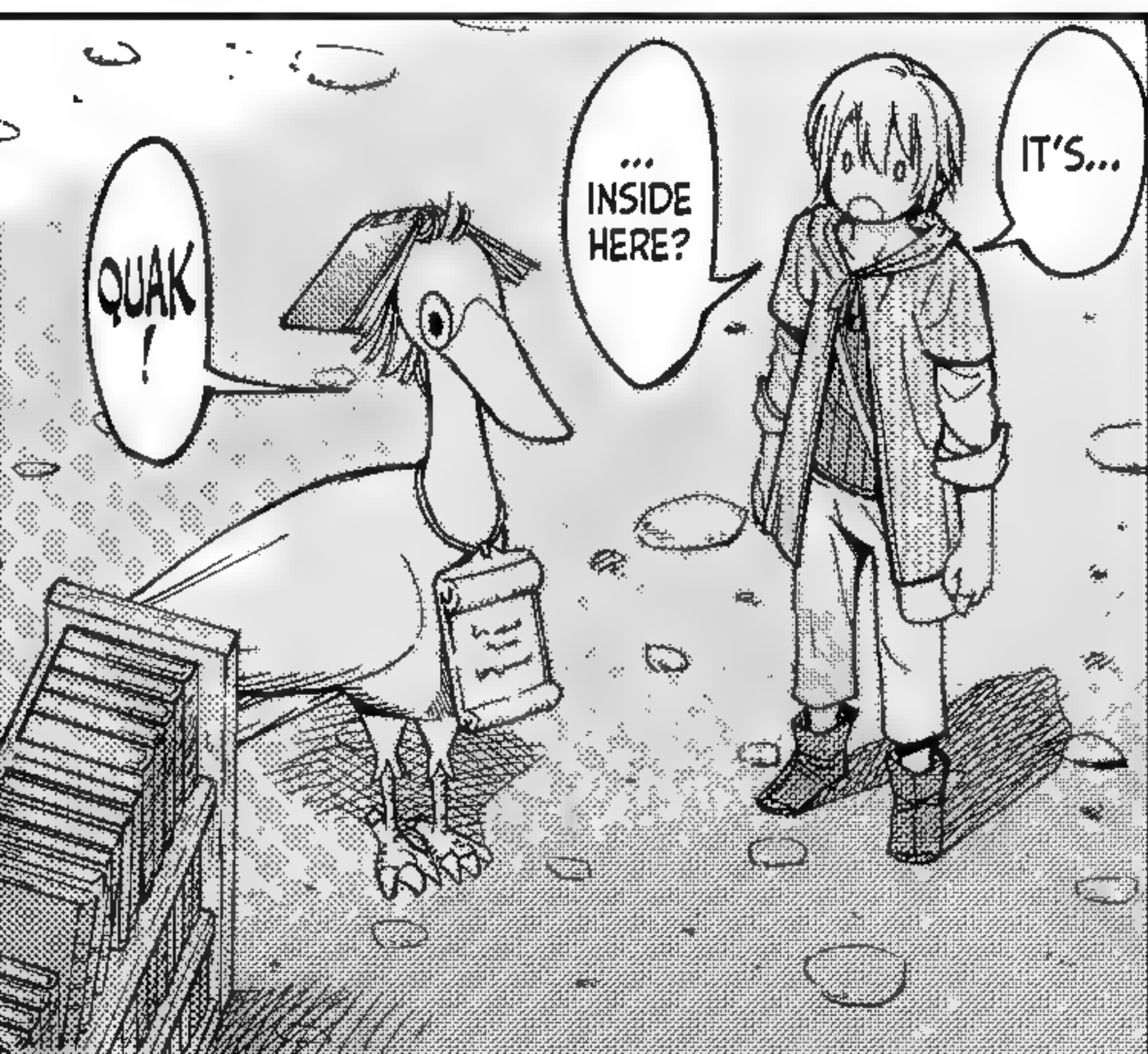
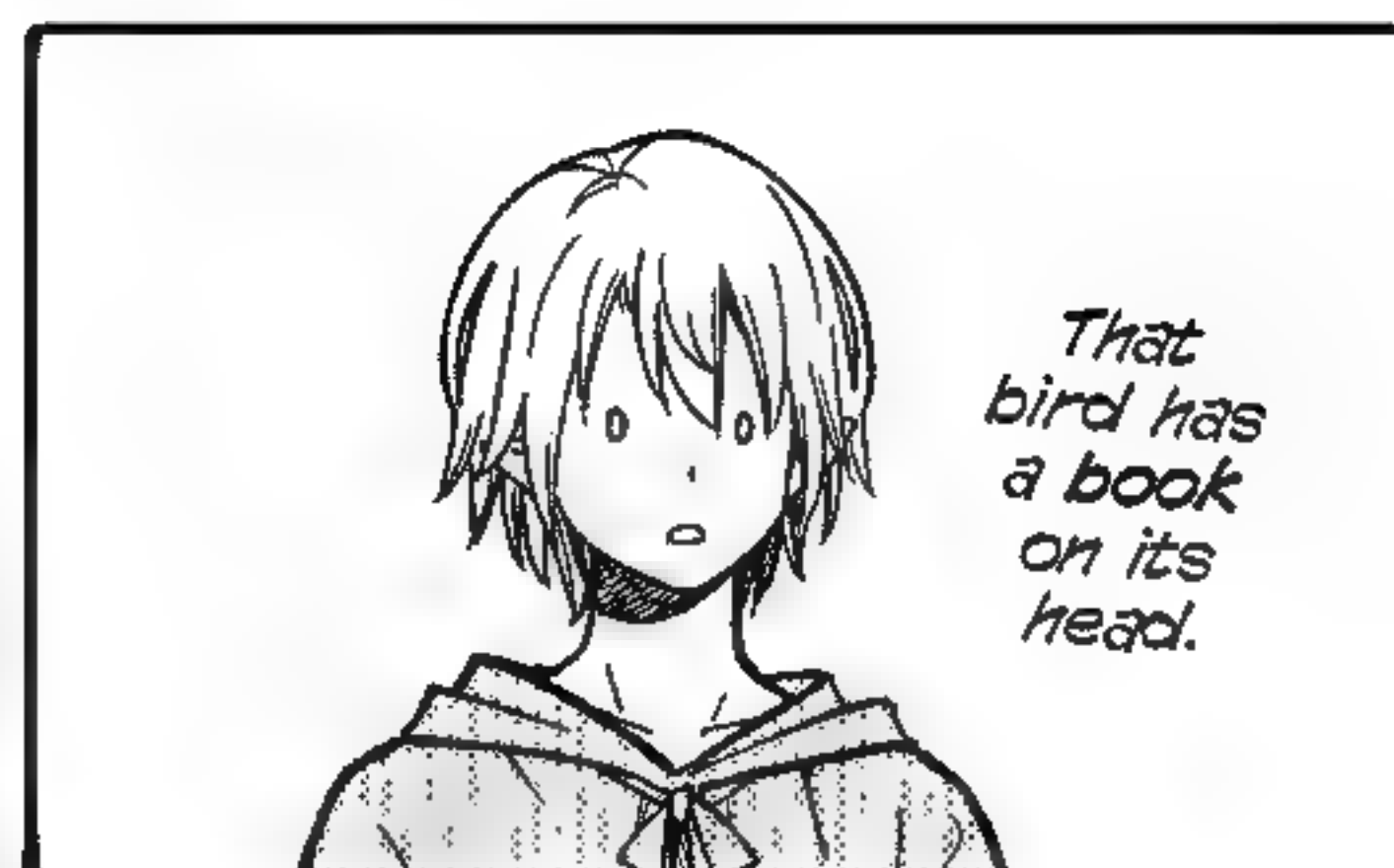
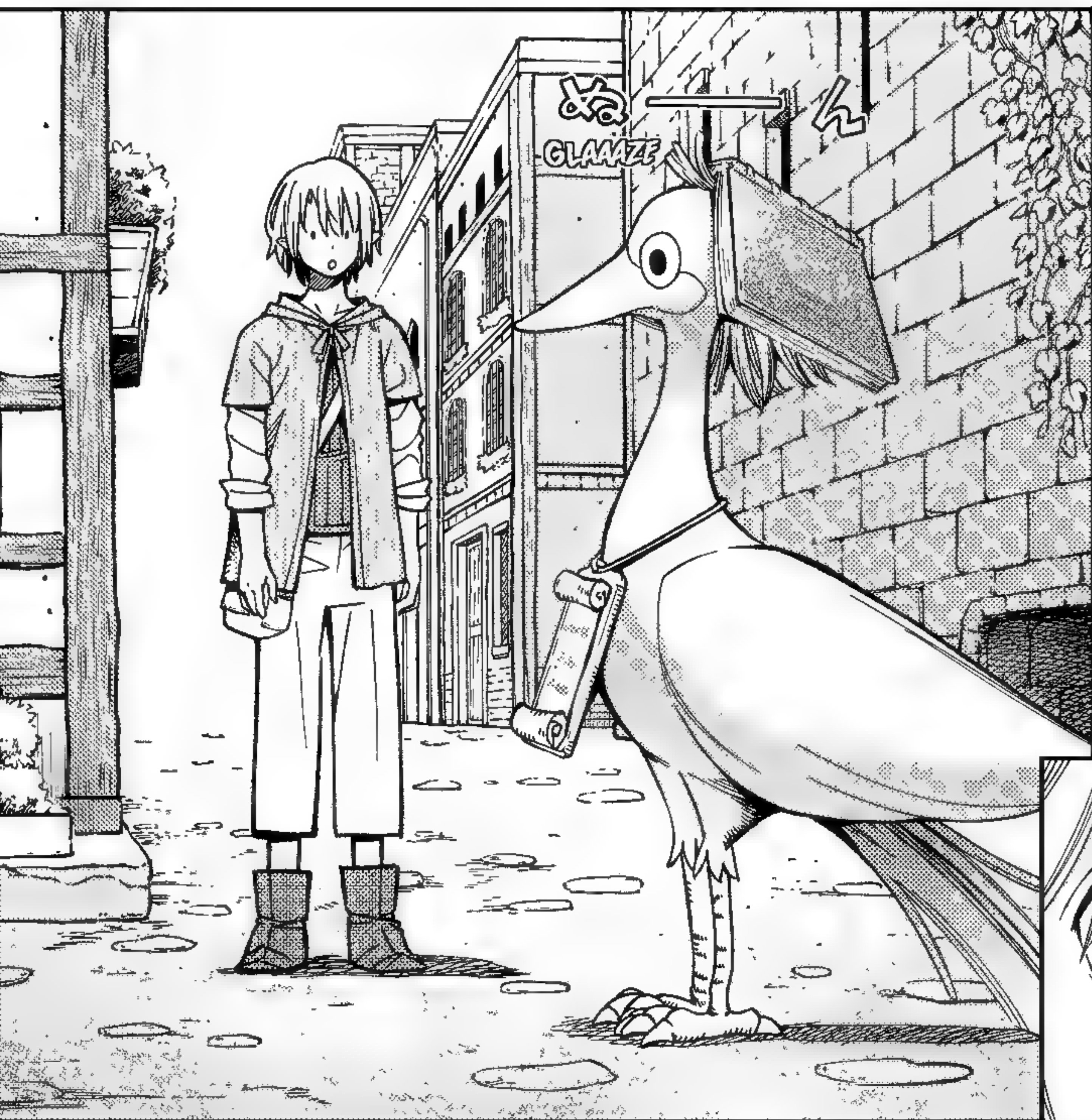
*Through books, they had come to know of the vast world beyond their own.*

*Such small differences in appearance did not faze these avid young readers.*

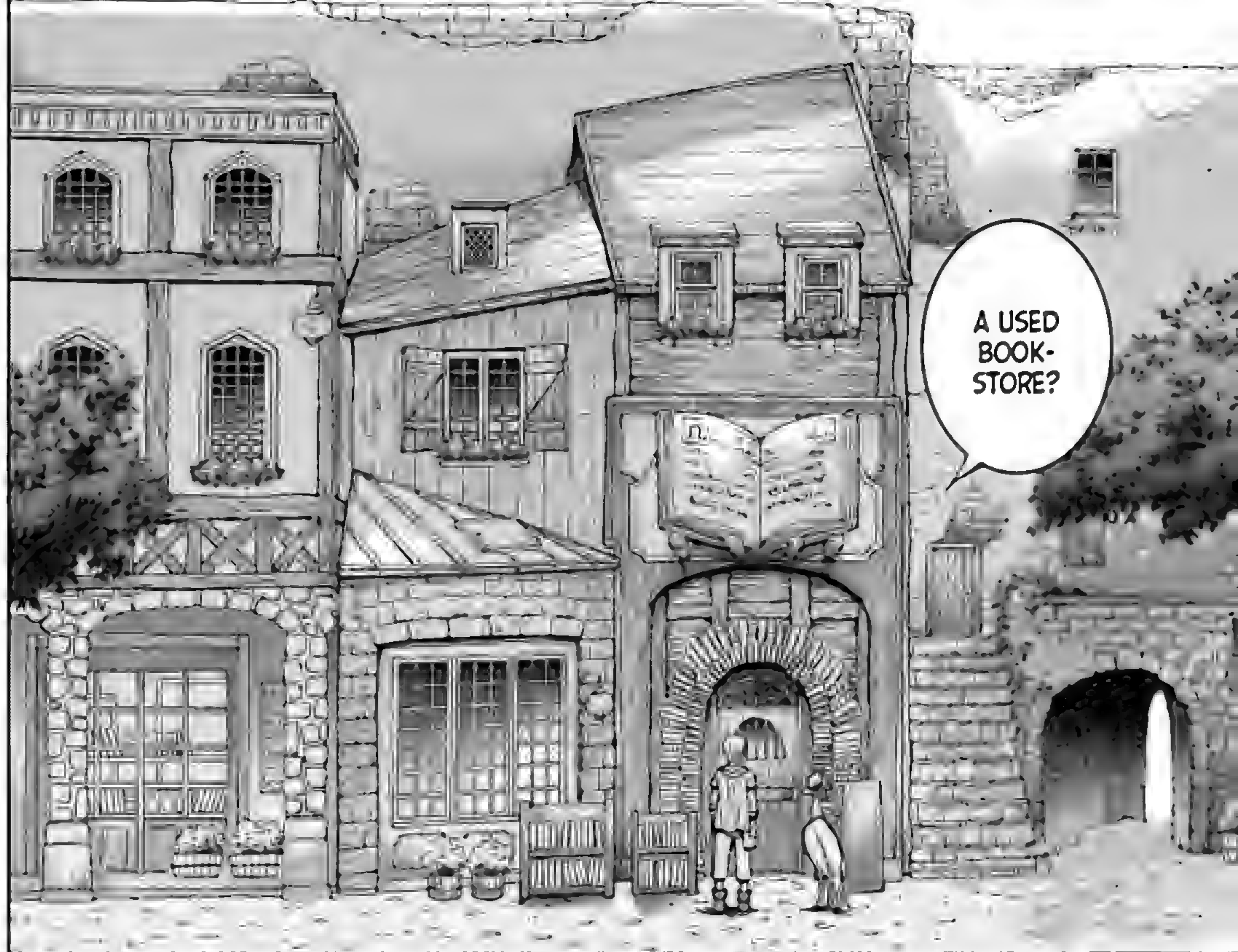
*...that reading was a common passion Itzamna.*

*It was proof enough...*













WELCOME,  
YOUNG  
MAN...

...TO  
QUFUMATZ  
USED  
BOOKS.



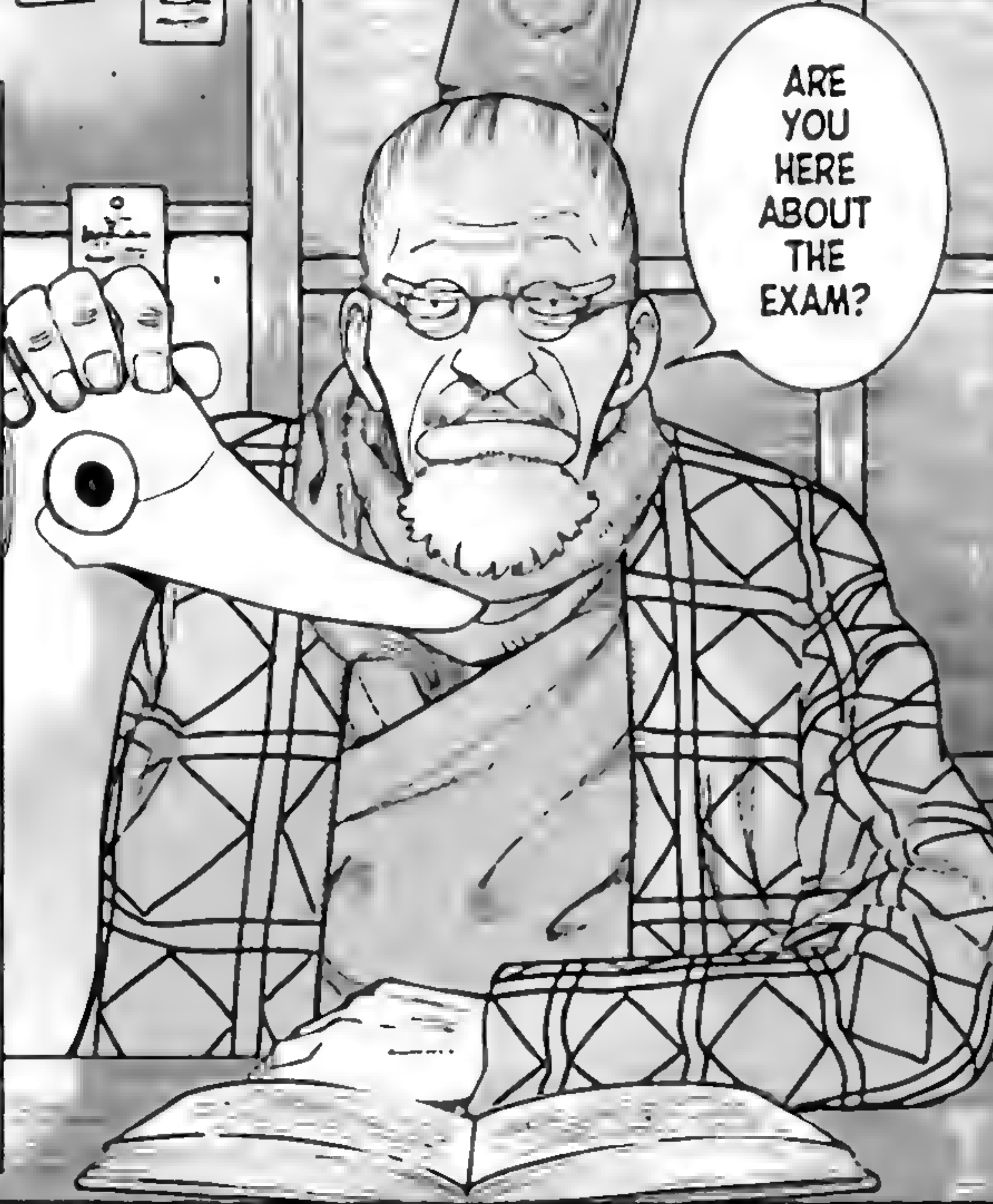
I WANT  
ONE OF  
THOSE!

HE'S GOT  
A BOOK  
AS A HAIR  
ACCESSORY!



SURE,  
SURE.

YES. I'M  
HERE TO  
REGISTER.



ARE  
YOU  
HERE  
ABOUT  
THE  
EXAM?



NGH!

IT'S  
THAT  
MUCH  
?!

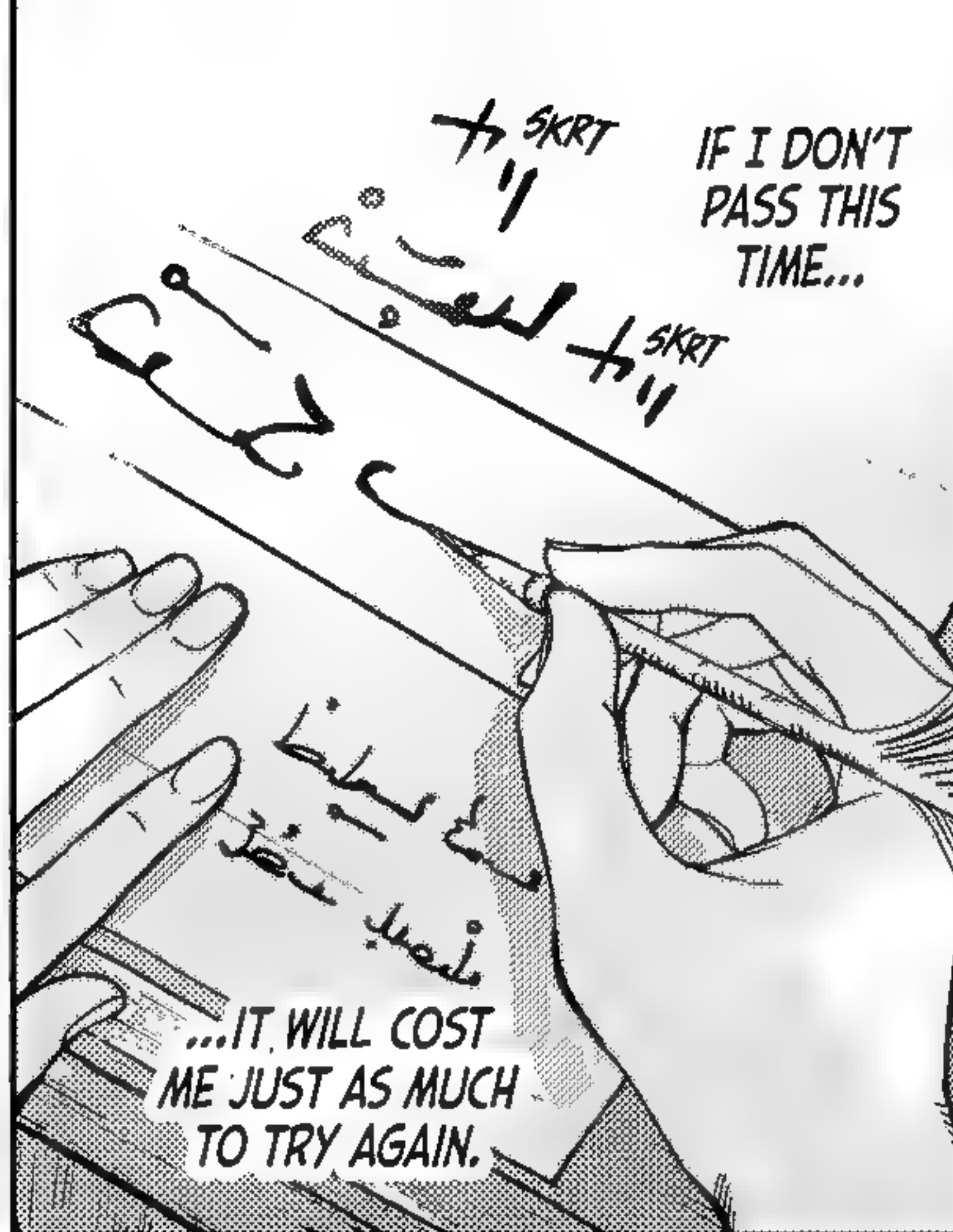
IT'LL BE  
48,000  
QUIPU.

USED BOOKSHOP OWNER AND FORMER KAFNA  
**TOTEC**





I KNOW I NEED TO  
PUSH THE THOUGHT  
OF FAILURE FROM  
MY MIND, BUT...

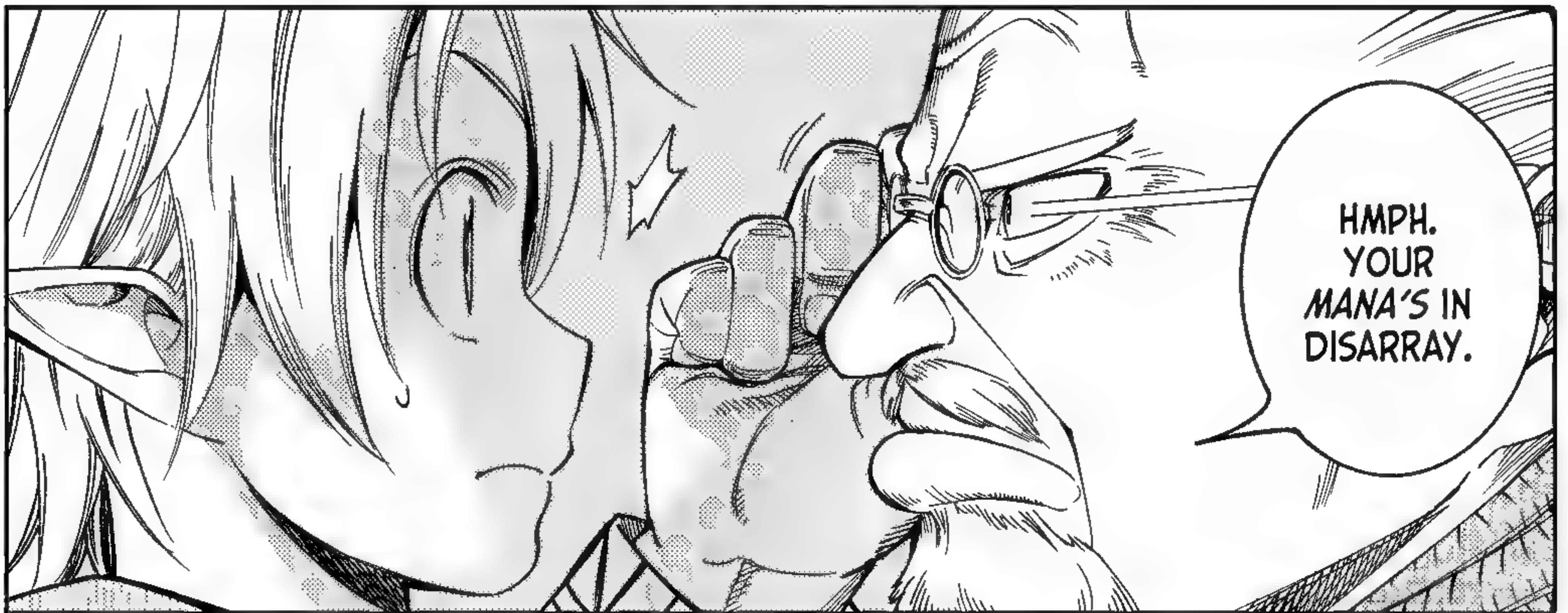


IF I DON'T  
PASS THIS  
TIME...

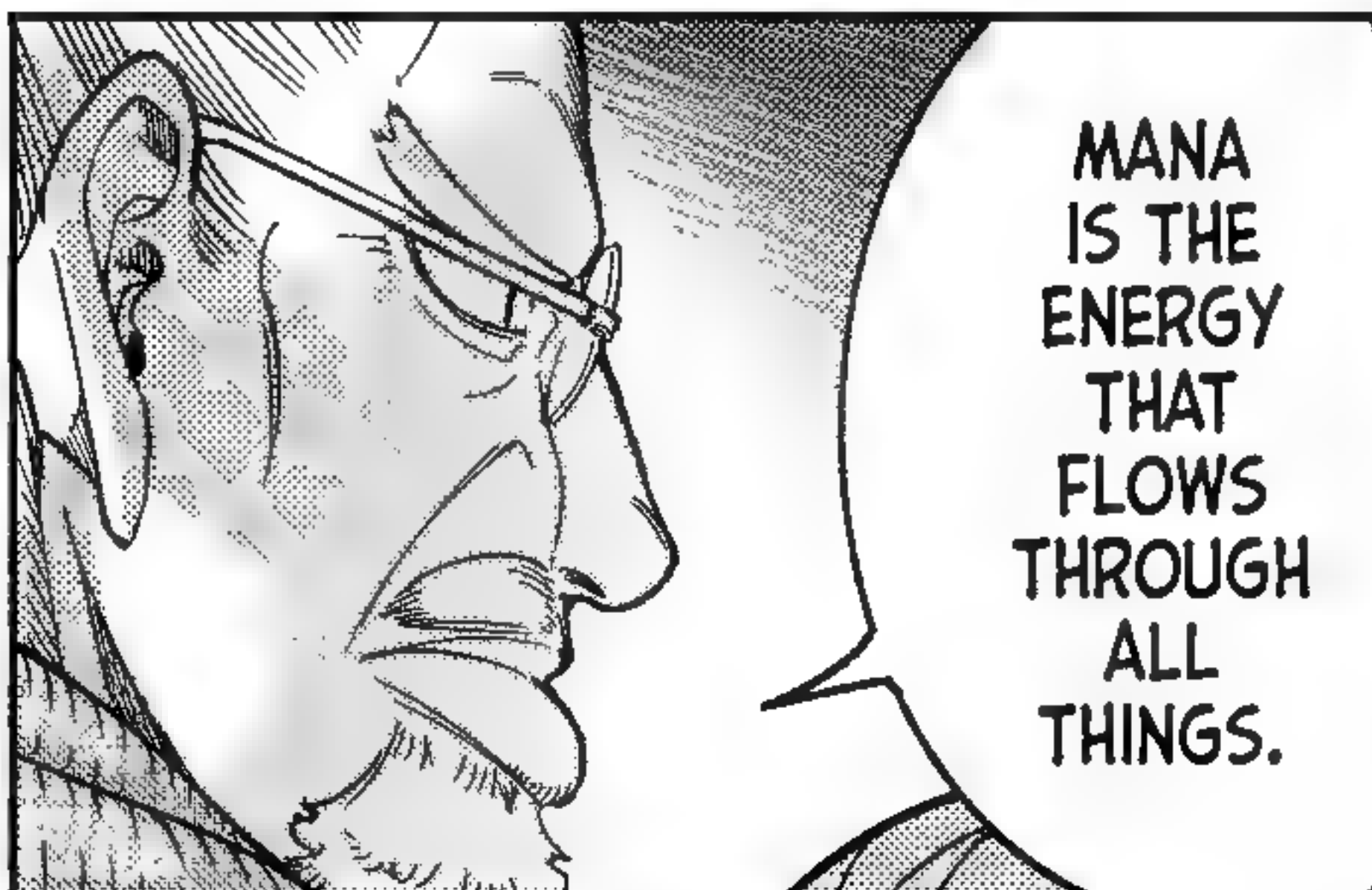
...IT WILL COST  
ME JUST AS MUCH  
TO TRY AGAIN.



BETWEEN THE REGISTRATION  
AND THE COST OF TRAVEL  
I'M SPENDING A WHOLE  
YEAR'S WORTH OF WAGES.



HMPH.  
YOUR  
MANA'S IN  
DISARRAY.

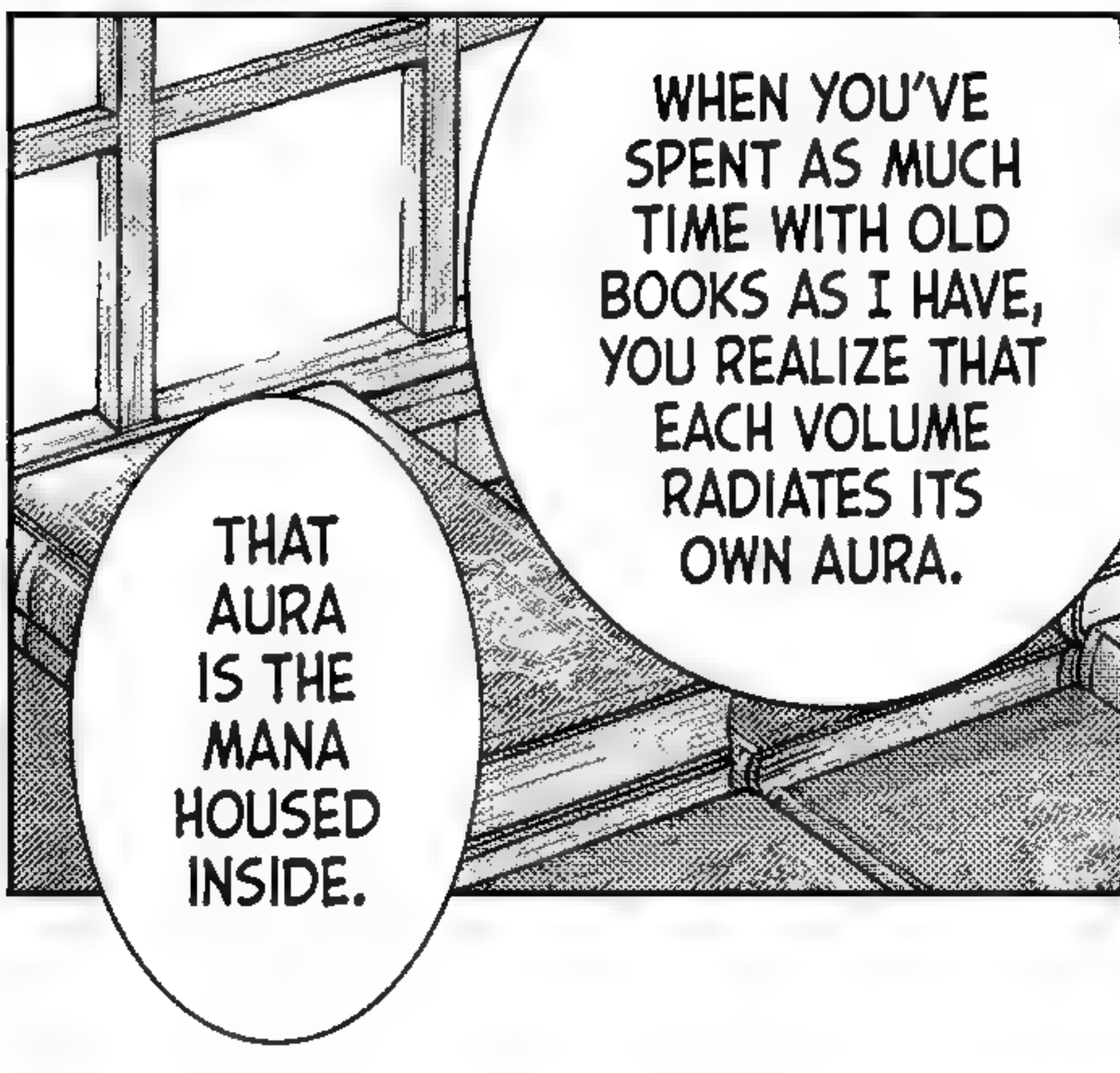


MANA  
IS THE  
ENERGY  
THAT  
FLOWS  
THROUGH  
ALL  
THINGS.



YOU  
CAN  
SENSE  
THAT  
ABOUT  
SOME-  
ONE?

DEPENDS  
ON THE  
PERSON.



WHEN YOU'VE  
SPENT AS MUCH  
TIME WITH OLD  
BOOKS AS I HAVE,  
YOU REALIZE THAT  
EACH VOLUME  
RADIATES ITS  
OWN AURA.

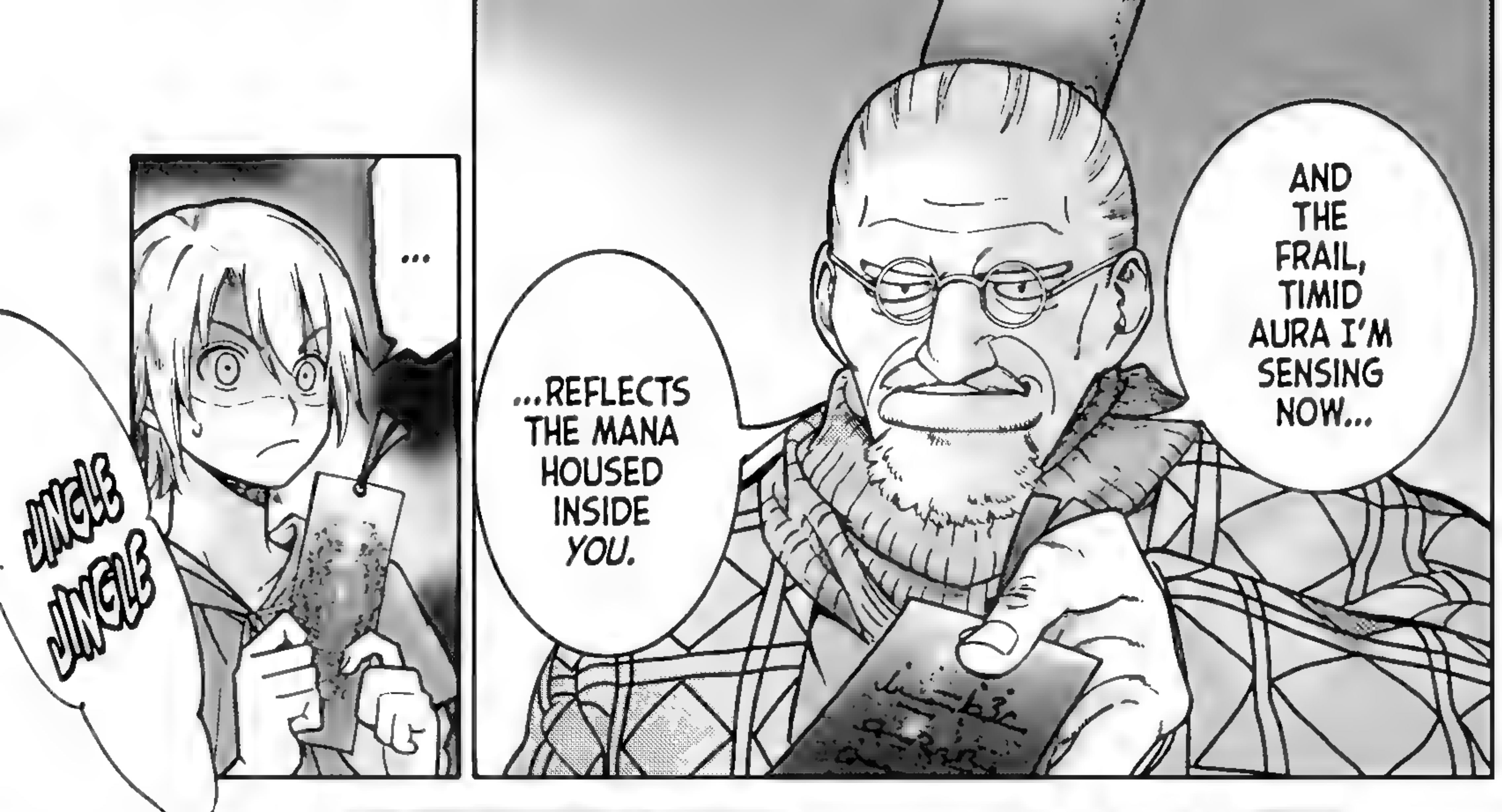
THAT  
AURA  
IS THE  
MANA  
HOUSED  
INSIDE.



YOU'VE  
GOT  
SOME  
FINE  
MANA.

TAKE  
GOOD  
CARE  
OF IT.









GENTLY TIP  
THE BOOK  
OUTWARD  
FROM THE  
TOP OF THE  
SPINE.



THAT'S  
THE  
RIGHT  
WAY TO  
DO IT.

THEN  
GRAB  
FROM  
THE  
CENTER  
AND  
SLIDE.



THEY'LL  
FALL APART  
IF YOU  
PULL THEM  
OUT LIKE  
THAT.

THEY  
WILL  
?!



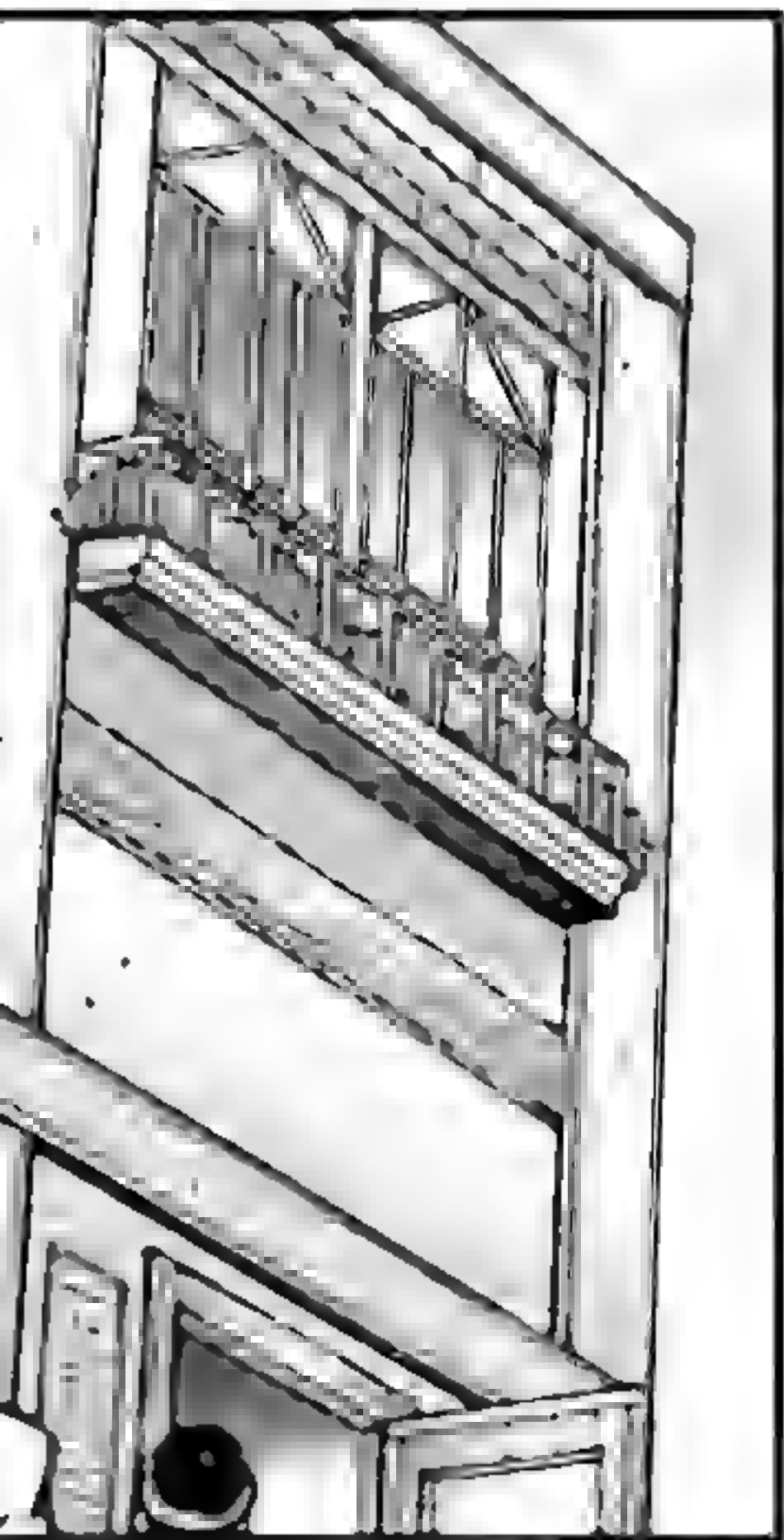
WOW!

*I  
had  
no  
idea!*

IT'S  
IMPORTANT  
TO TREAT  
IT KINDLY.

A  
BOOK'S  
SPINE IS  
LIKE A  
PERSON'S.









WE'LL  
JUST TAKE  
THESE NEW  
RELEASES  
...

...AND  
BE ON  
OUR  
MERRY  
WAY.

UM,  
EXCUSE ME.  
ARE YOU  
PLANNING TO  
TAKE THE  
KAFNA EXAM,  
TOO?



MY  
NAME  
IS  
THEO  
FUMIS.

WHAT'S  
YOURS  
?







WHY  
NOT  
?

TELL ME.  
THIS TOWN  
HAS NO  
LIBRARY.

?!

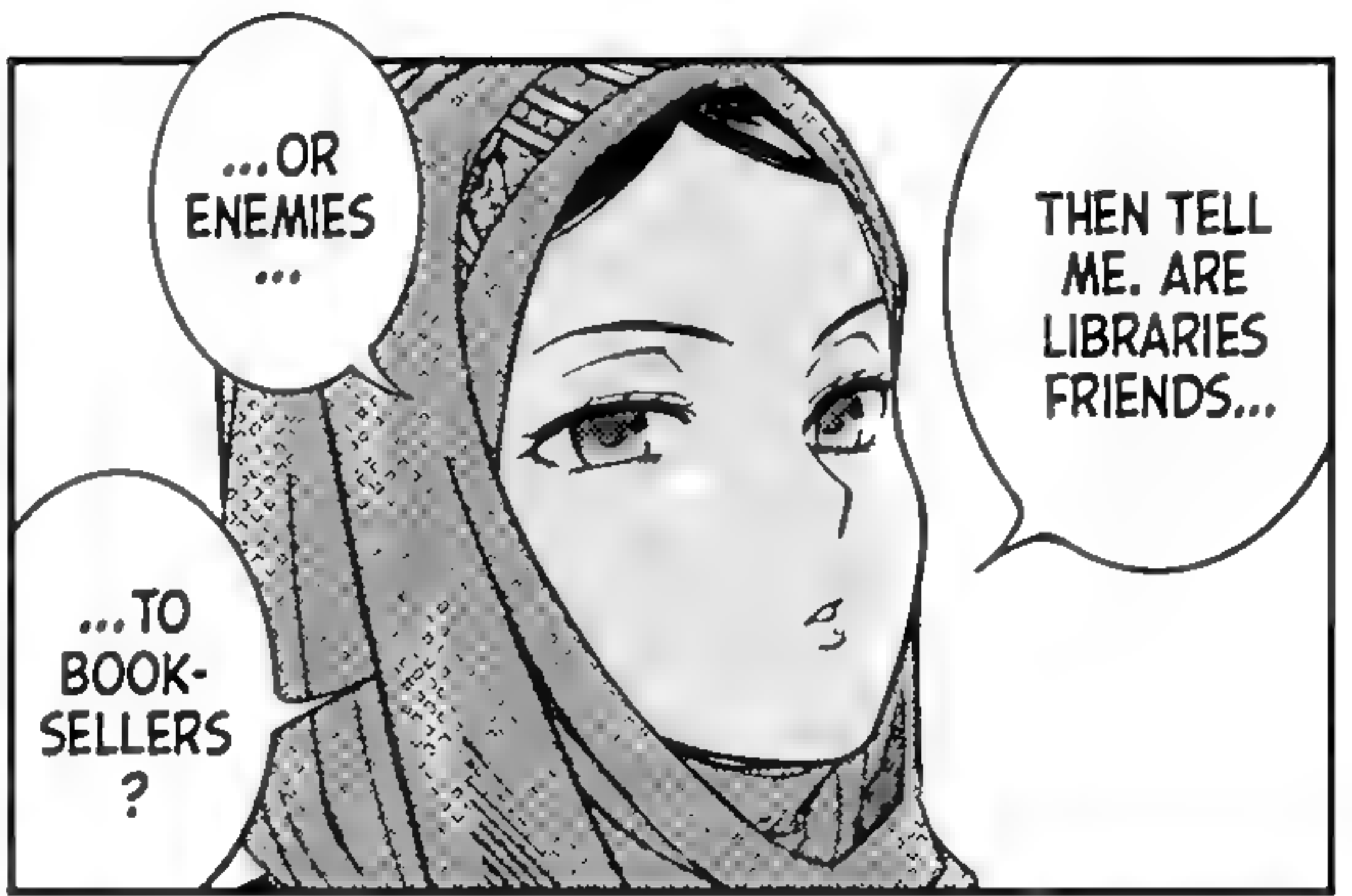
PROBABLY  
BECAUSE YOU'VE  
ALREADY GOT A  
STRONG READING  
CULTURE. THE  
CENTRAL LIBRARY  
DETERMINED A  
BRANCH WASN'T  
NECESSARY HERE.

PROBABLY  
BECAUSE THEY  
BELIEVE FREELY  
LENT BOOKS  
WILL EAT  
INTO THEIR  
BUSINESS.

WHY  
?

WHEN NEW  
LIBRARIES ARE  
PROPOSED,  
PROPRIETORS  
OF NEARBY  
BOOKSTORES  
OFTEN  
PROTEST.





...OR  
ENEMIES  
...

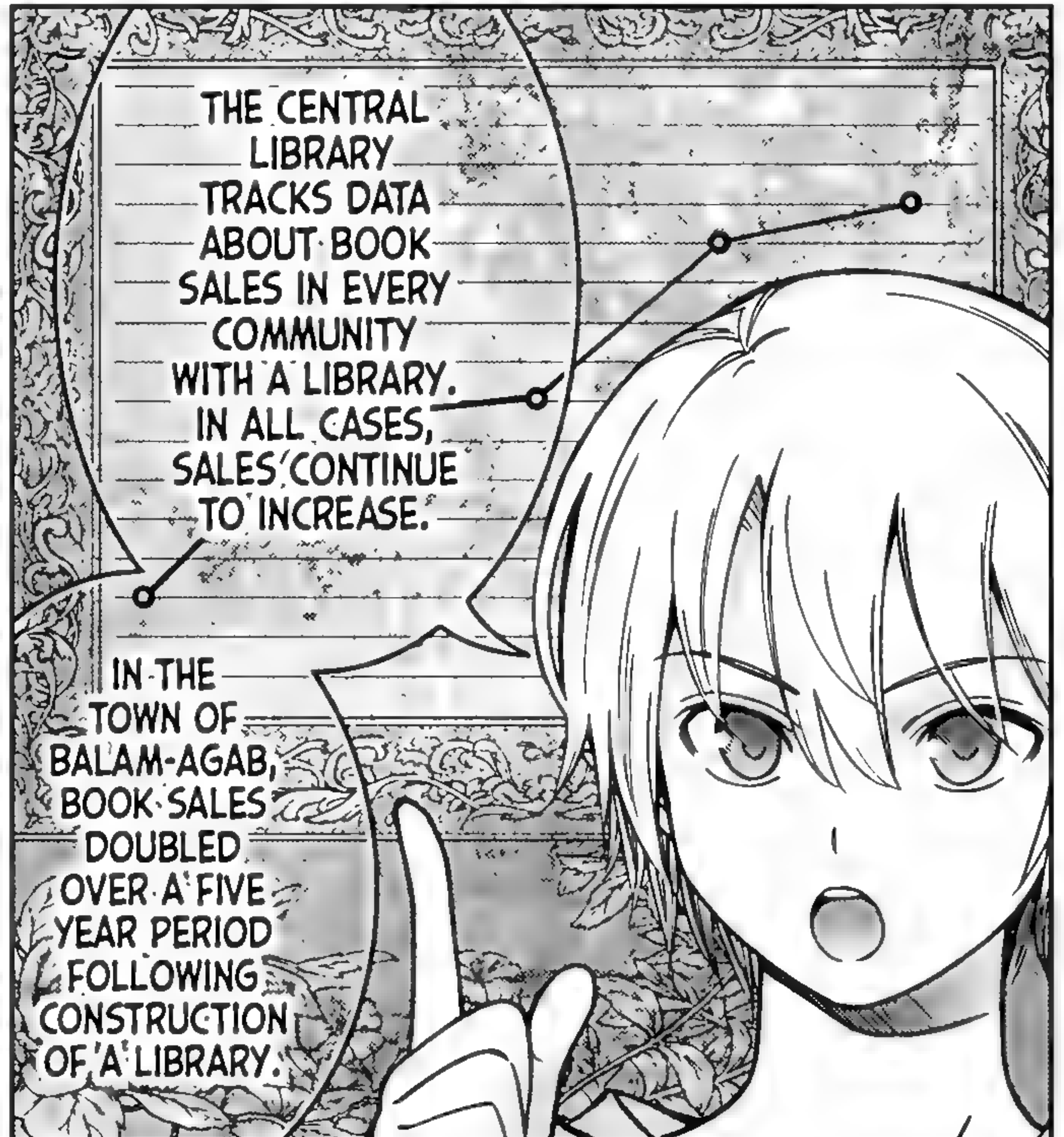
THEN TELL  
ME. ARE  
LIBRARIES  
FRIENDS...

...TO  
BOOK-  
SELLERS  
?



TWO  
MAJOR  
REASONS  
...

...WERE  
DETERMINED-  
AN INCREASE  
IN YOUNG  
READERS, AND  
REINFORCED  
READING HABITS  
ACROSS THE  
POPULATION.



THE CENTRAL  
LIBRARY  
TRACKS DATA  
ABOUT BOOK  
SALES IN EVERY  
COMMUNITY  
WITH A LIBRARY.  
IN ALL CASES,  
SALES CONTINUE  
TO INCREASE.

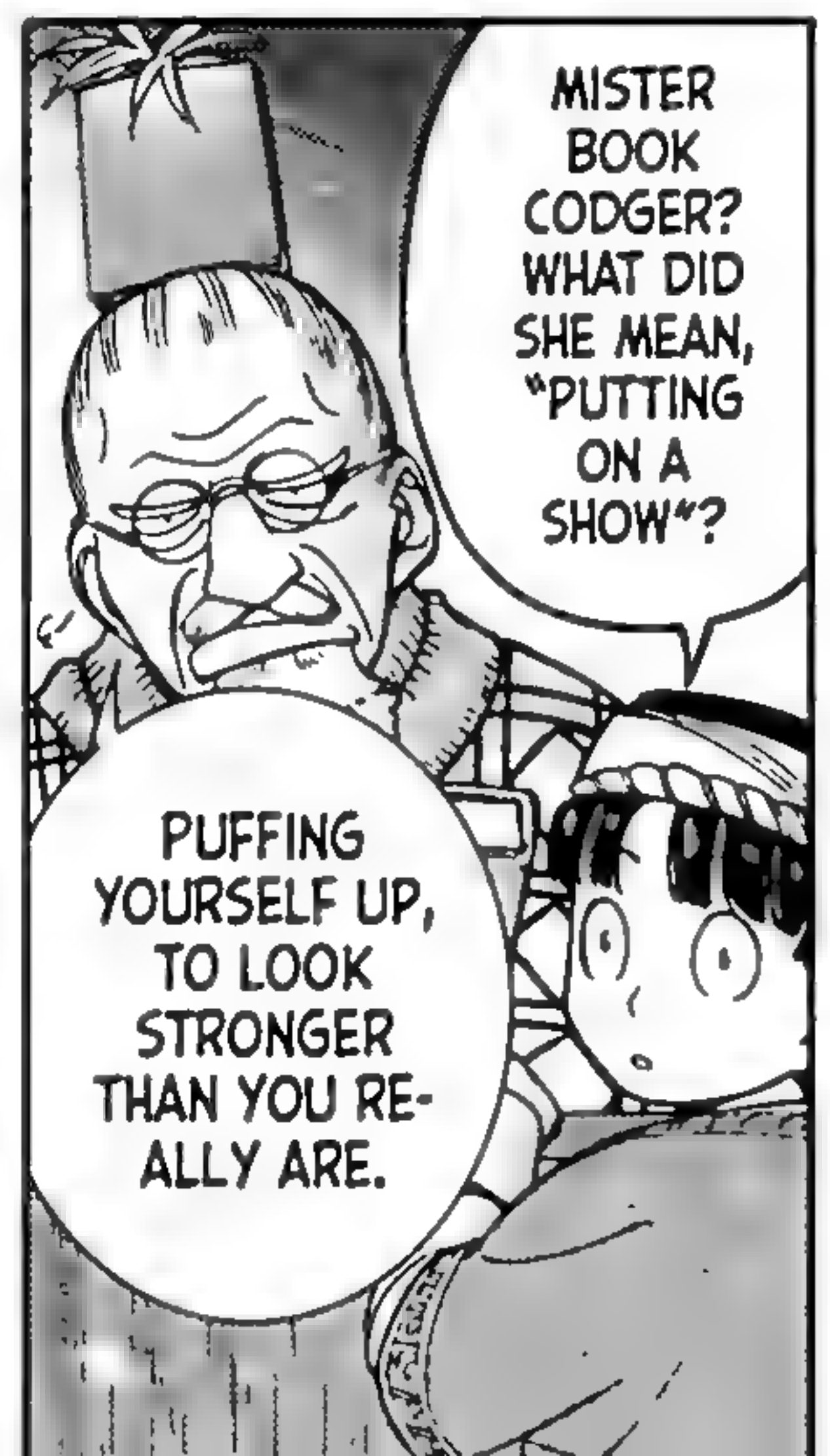
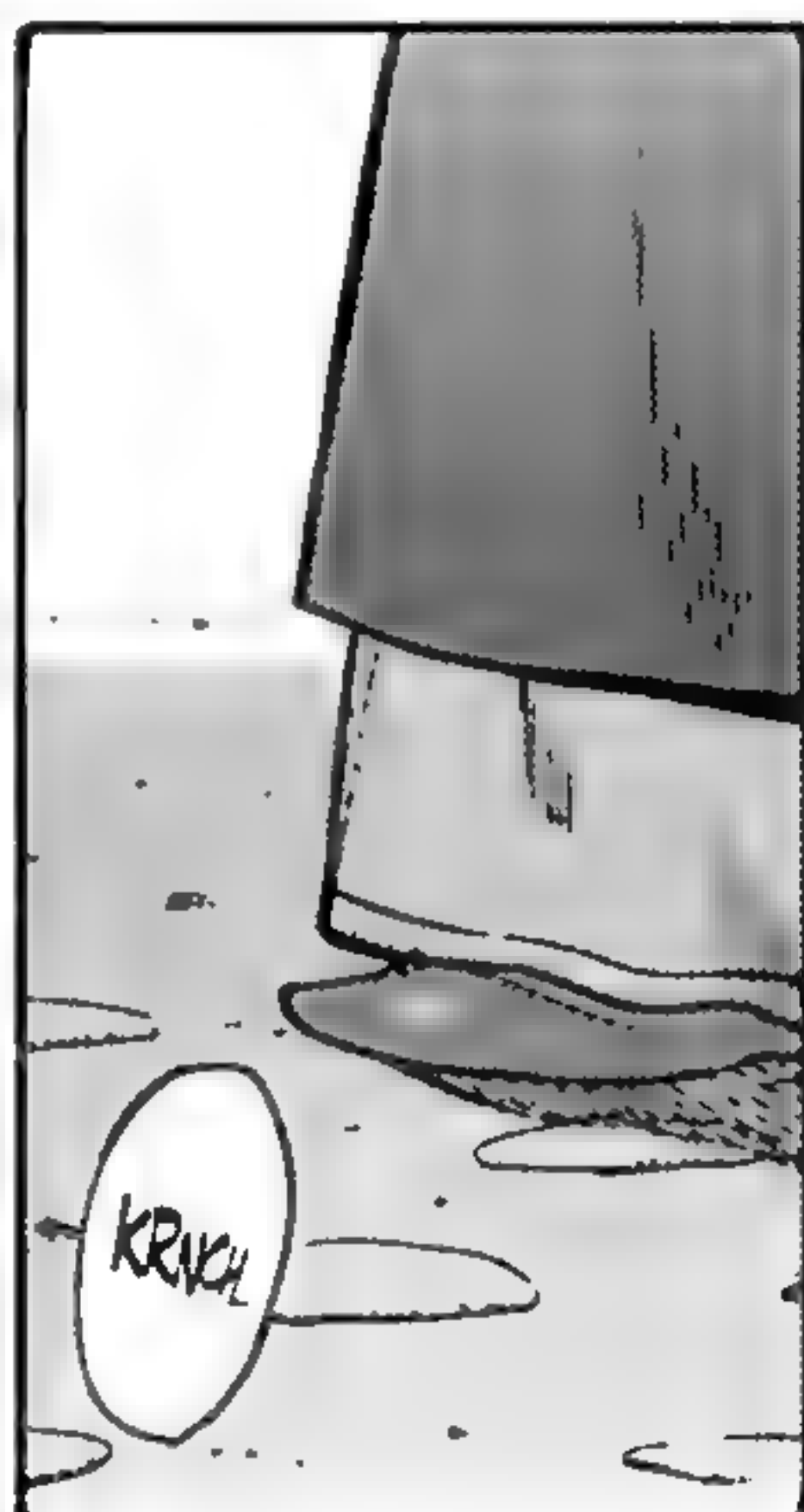
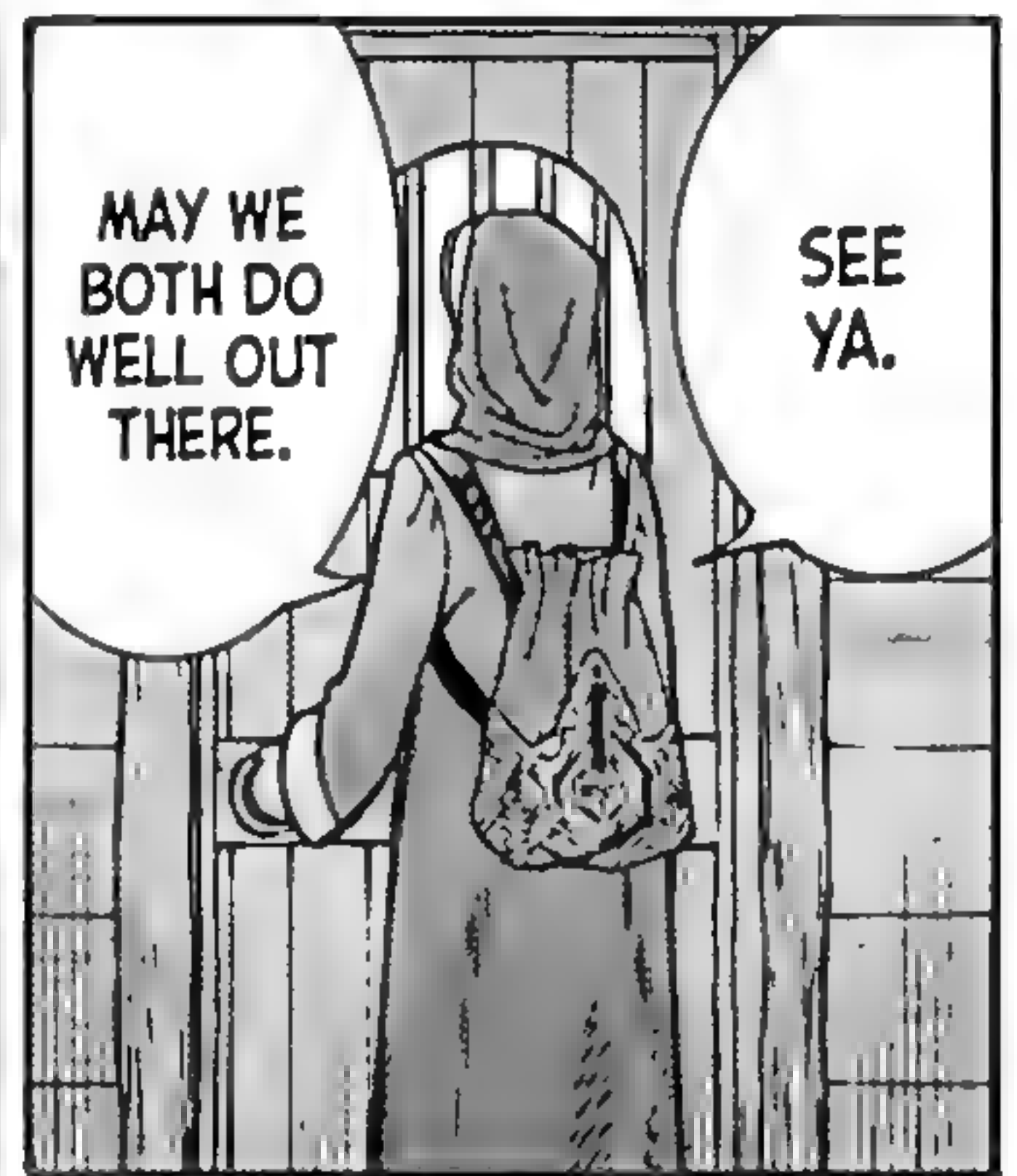
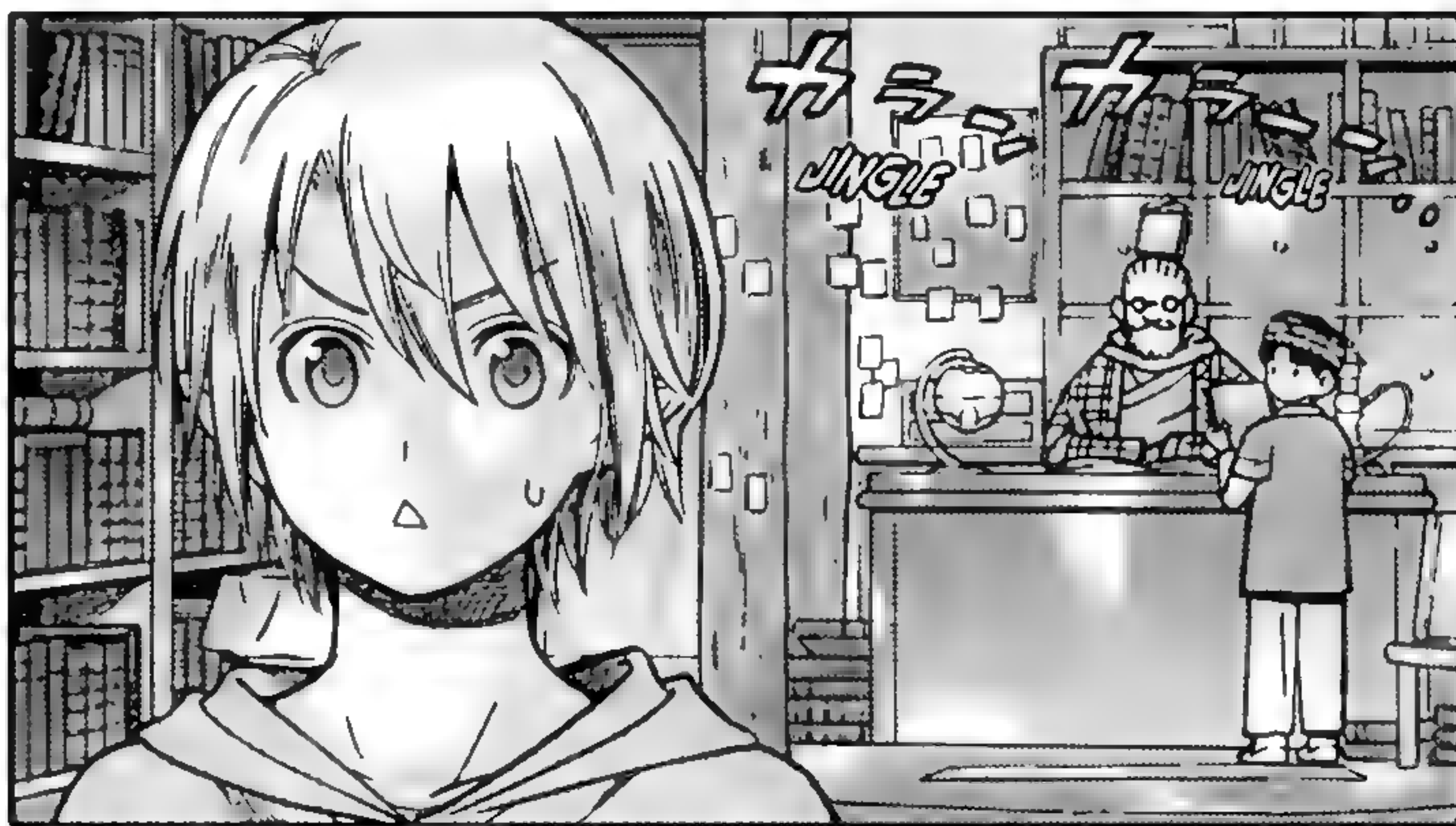
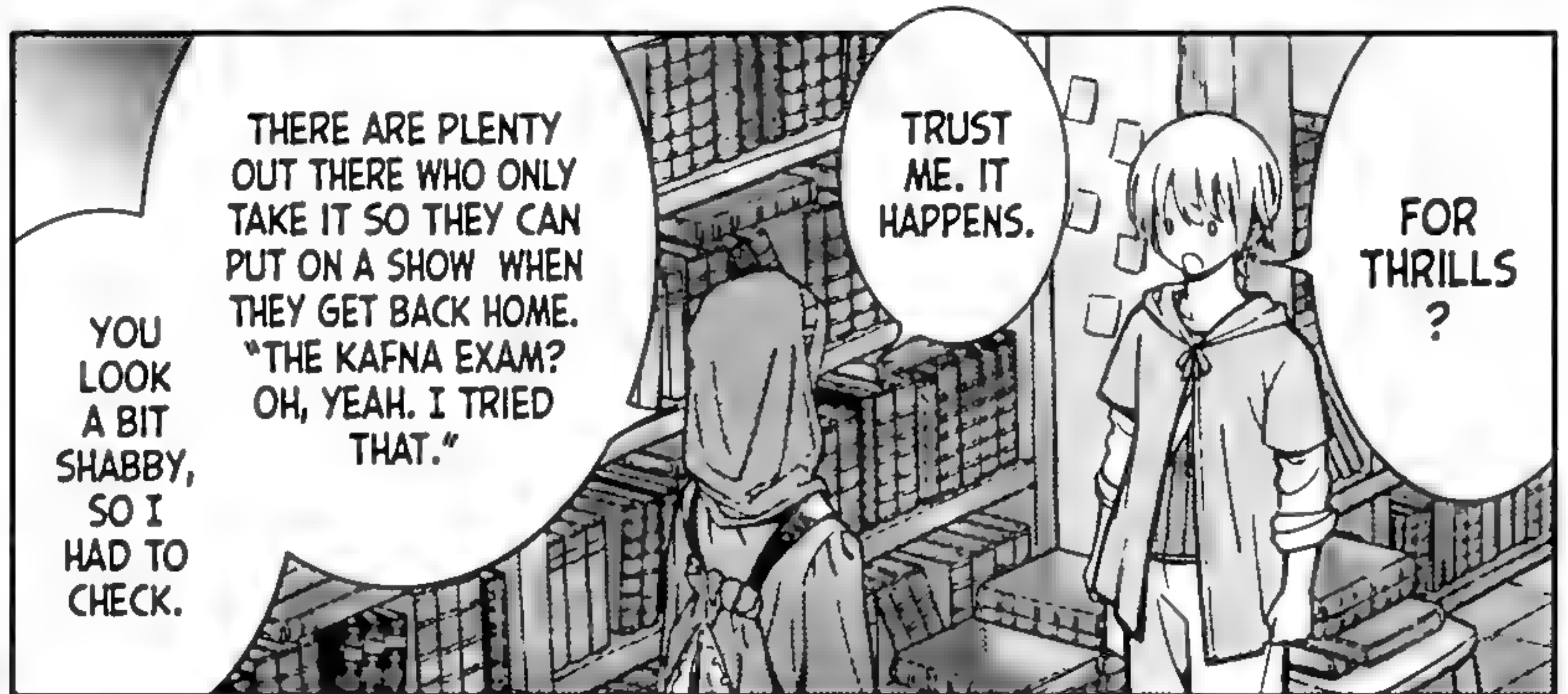
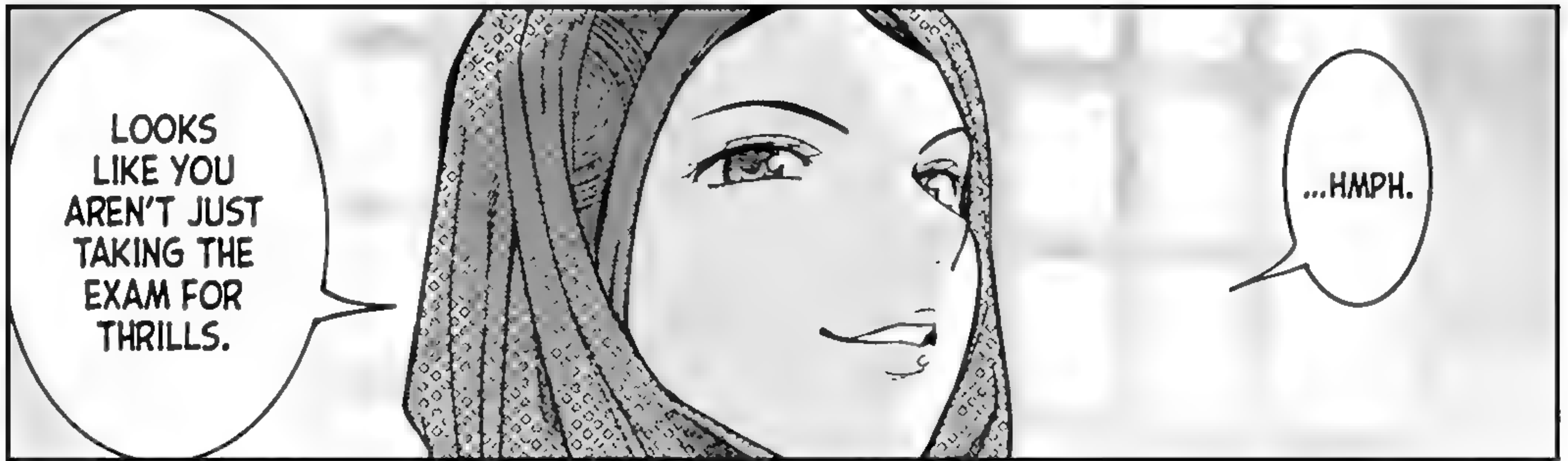
IN THE  
TOWN OF  
BALAM-AGAB,  
BOOK SALES  
DOUBLED  
OVER A FIVE  
YEAR PERIOD  
FOLLOWING  
CONSTRUCTION  
OF A LIBRARY.



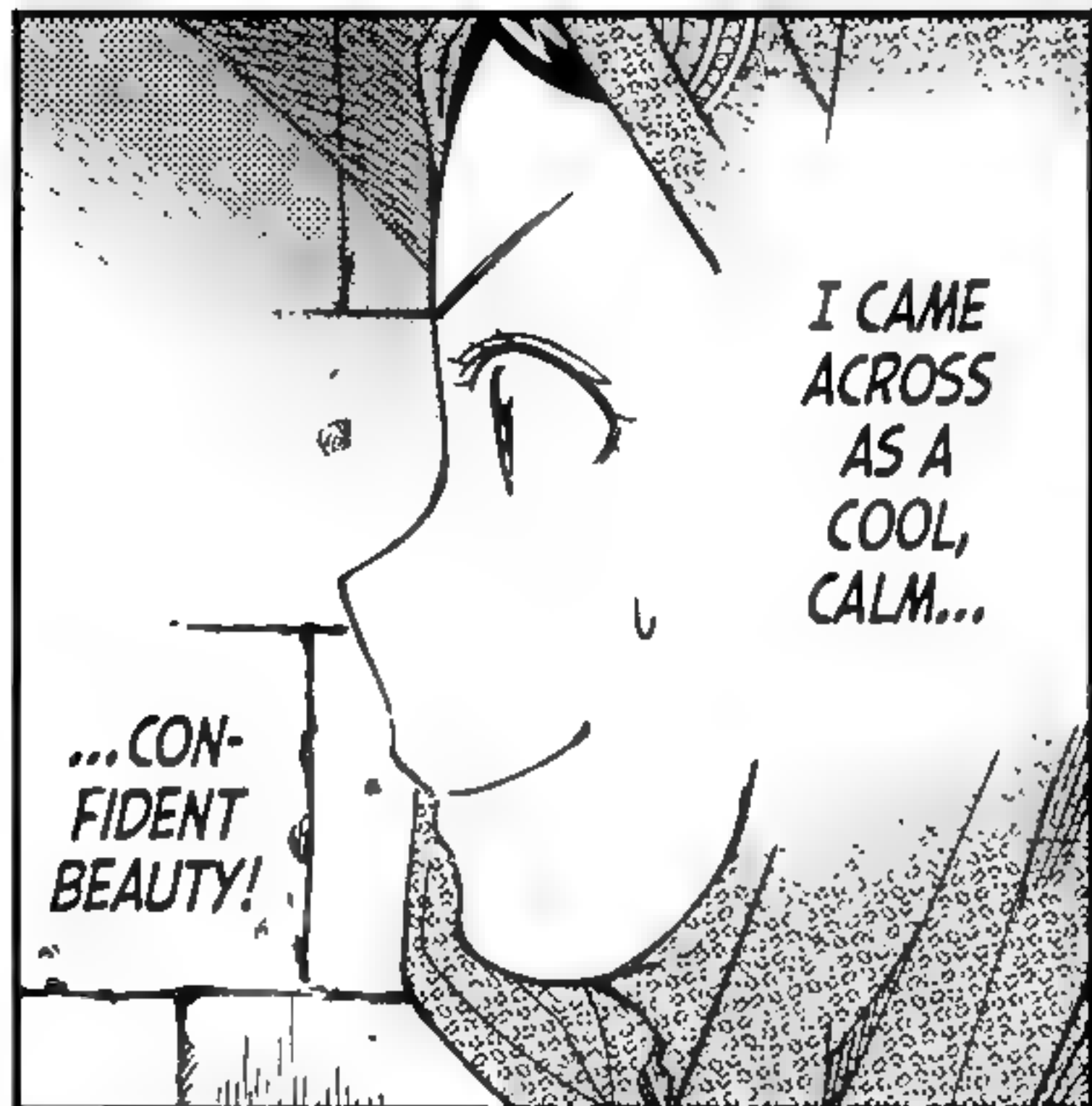
...BUT TO ME,  
LIBRARIES AND USED  
BOOKSTORES DON'T  
SEEM ADVERSARIAL.  
THEY CAN COOPERATE  
WITH SELLERS OF  
NEW BOOKS TO THE  
BENEFIT OF ALL.

I DON'T  
KNOW IF IT'S  
ACCURATE TO  
USE EXPRES-  
SIONS LIKE  
"FRIENDS" OR  
"ENEMIES"...









...CONFIDENT BEAUTY!

I CAME ACROSS AS A COOL, CALM...



A BUMPKIN LIKE THAT WAS THE PERFECT CHANCE TO PRACTICE BEFORE I HEAD OFF!



I NAILED IT BACK THERE !!



I'M ABOUT TO DEPART FOR AFTZAAK. I'M OFF TO FIGHT!

NO! IF I TRY TO BE CONSIDERATE ALL THE TIME, PEOPLE WON'T TAKE ME SERIOUSLY!



MAYBE CALLING HIM SHABBY WAS A BIT MUCH.



UM, EXCUSE ME...

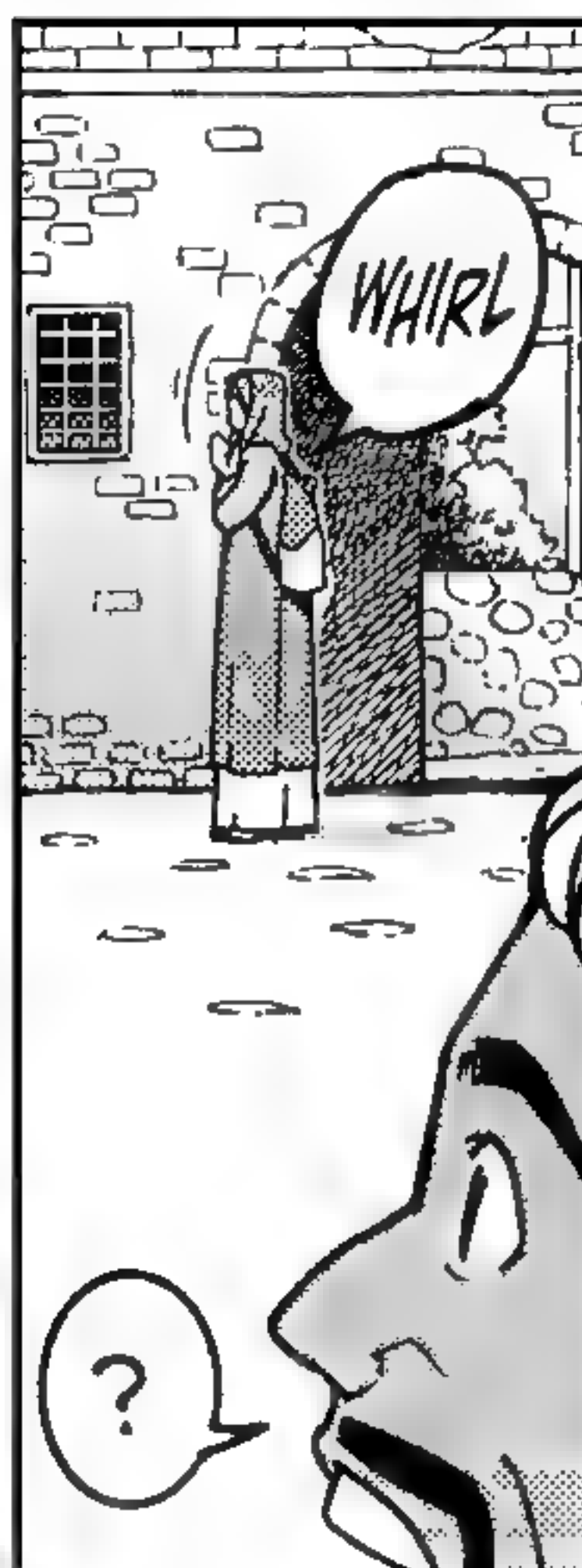


No. None of that.

It's time to get serious.

IS IT JUST ME, OR IS MIHONA ACTING STRANGE?

PROBABLY HUNG UP ON SOME BOOK AGAIN. YOU KNOW HOW SHE LOVES TO ACT LIKE HER FAVORITE CHARACTERS.



WHIRL

?



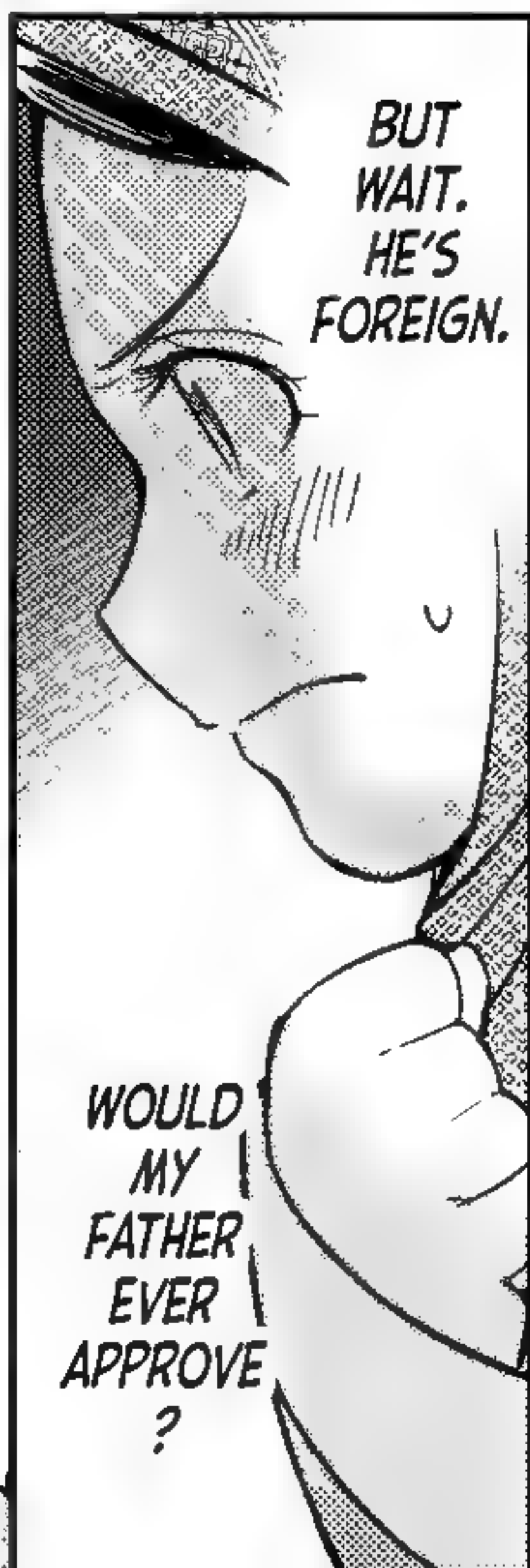
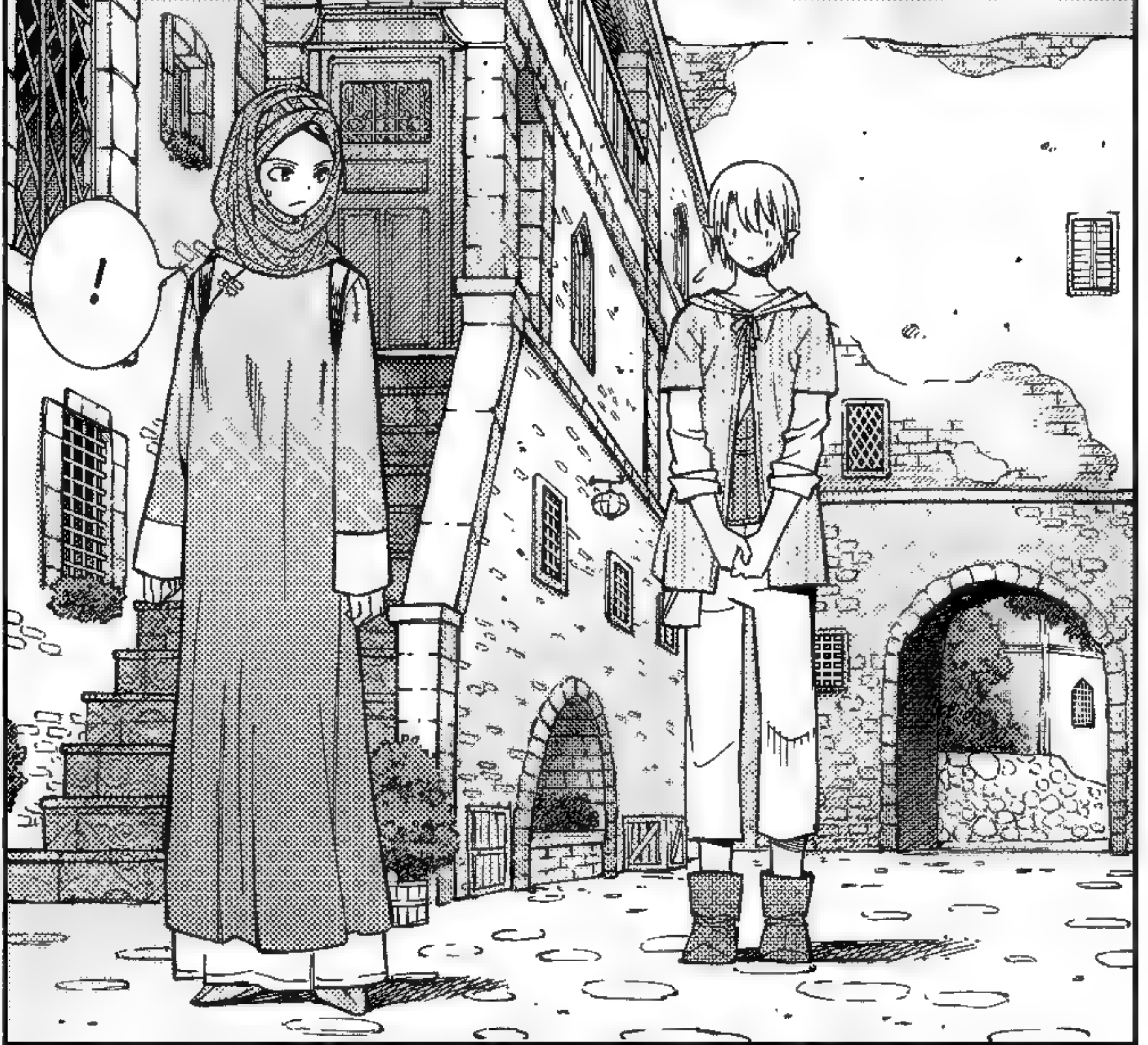
HEY, MIHONA! I HEAR YOU'RE LEAVING SOON!

Good luck!

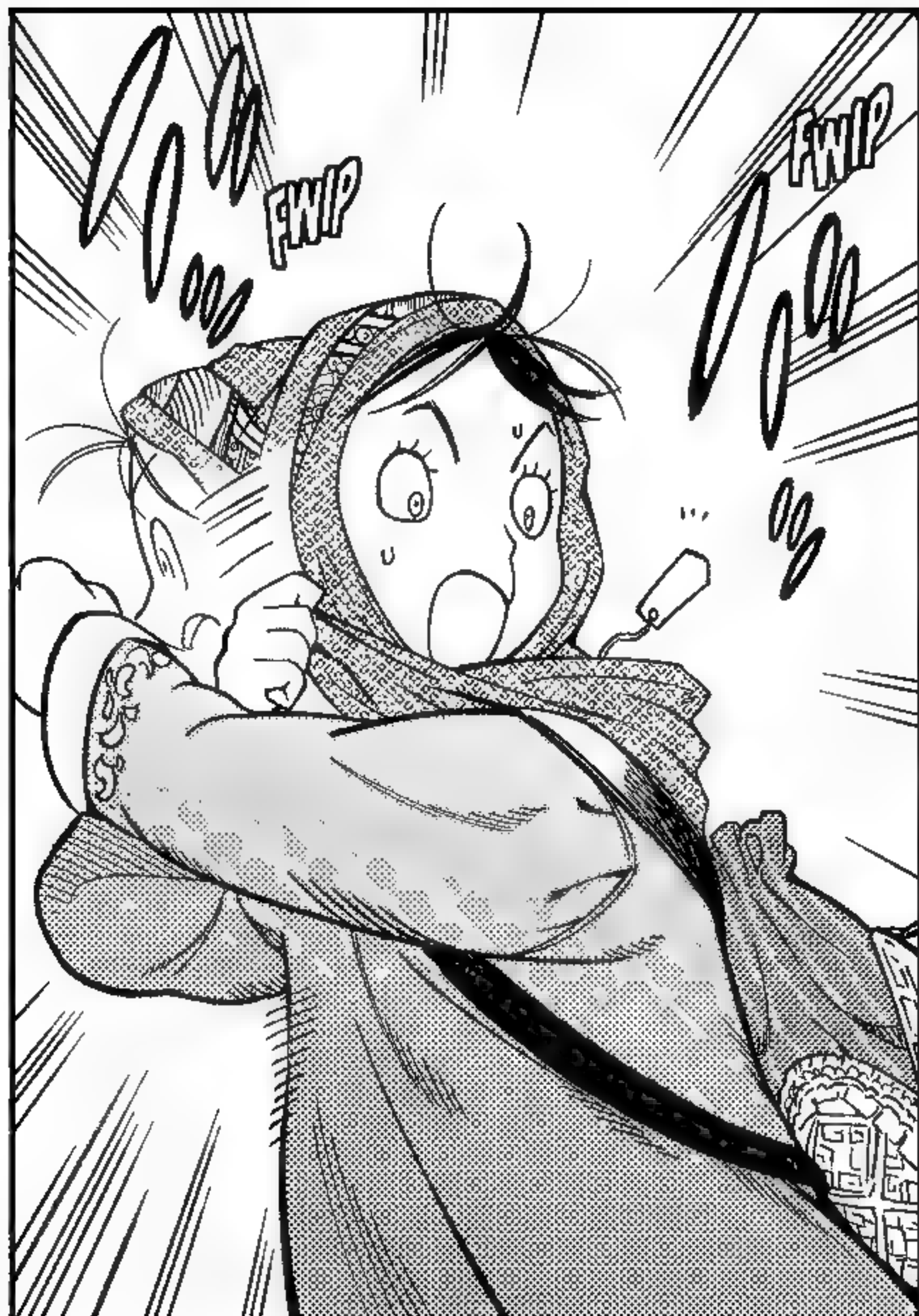
THANKS! YEAH, I'LL DO MY B-

grin

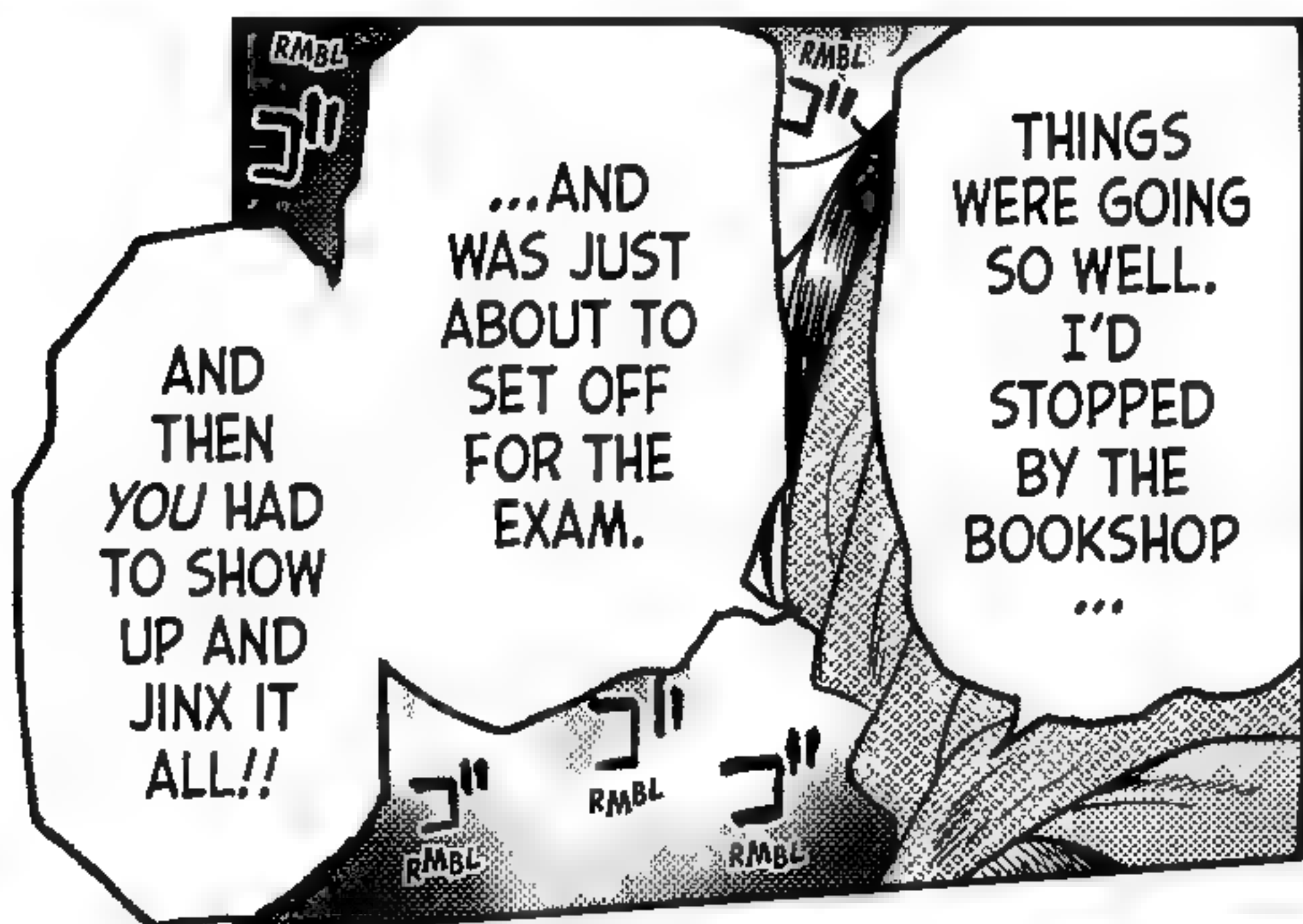




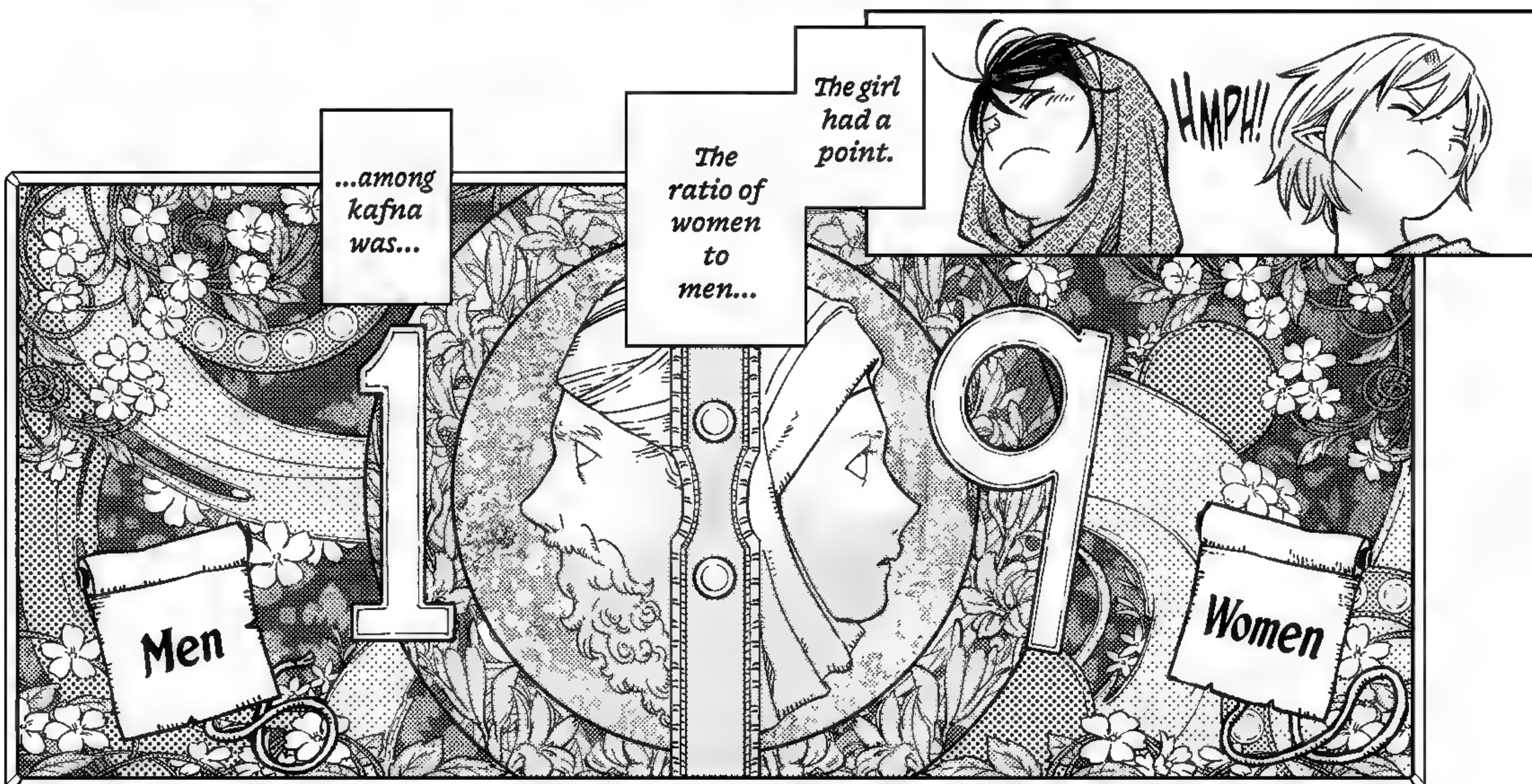














While men  
of this world  
could aspire  
to be anything  
from hamna to  
meham to kalep  
—scholar, monk,  
or merchant—  
women had far  
fewer choices.

Thus, women  
flocked to  
this one of  
few available  
professions,  
accounting  
for the  
disparate  
ratio.

Hamna  
had slightly  
higher social  
standing  
than  
kafna...

...as well  
as much  
greater  
income.

WAY  
TOO MUCH!  
I GOT IT  
JUST FOR  
TODAY,  
AND—

DID YOU  
SPEND A  
LOT OF  
MONEY  
ON IT?

I NEVER  
SHOULD HAVE  
BOUGHT THIS.  
I NEVER WEAR  
STUFF THIS  
FANCY.

UGH. LOOK  
WHAT THIS  
IS DOING  
TO MY HAIR.  
I HAD IT  
UNDER  
CONTROL.

I TAKE IT  
MAYBE YOU  
WERE PUTTING  
ON AN ACT  
BACK AT THE  
BOOKSHOP?

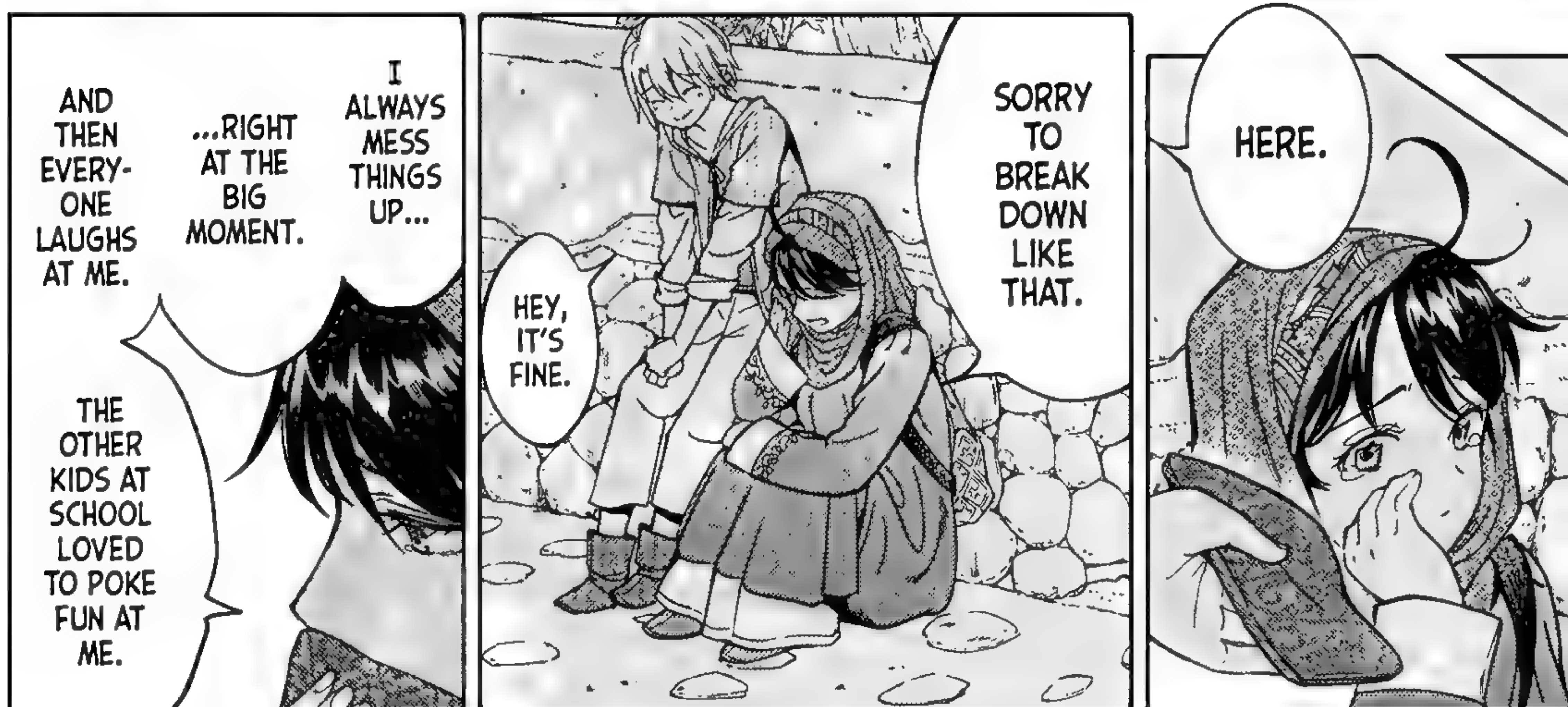
You  
seem  
pretty  
different  
now.

THIS  
OLD  
THING?  
I'VE  
HAD IT  
FOREVER!

HEY,  
ARE  
YOU  
ALL  
RIGHT  
?!

I  
MEAN  
...!









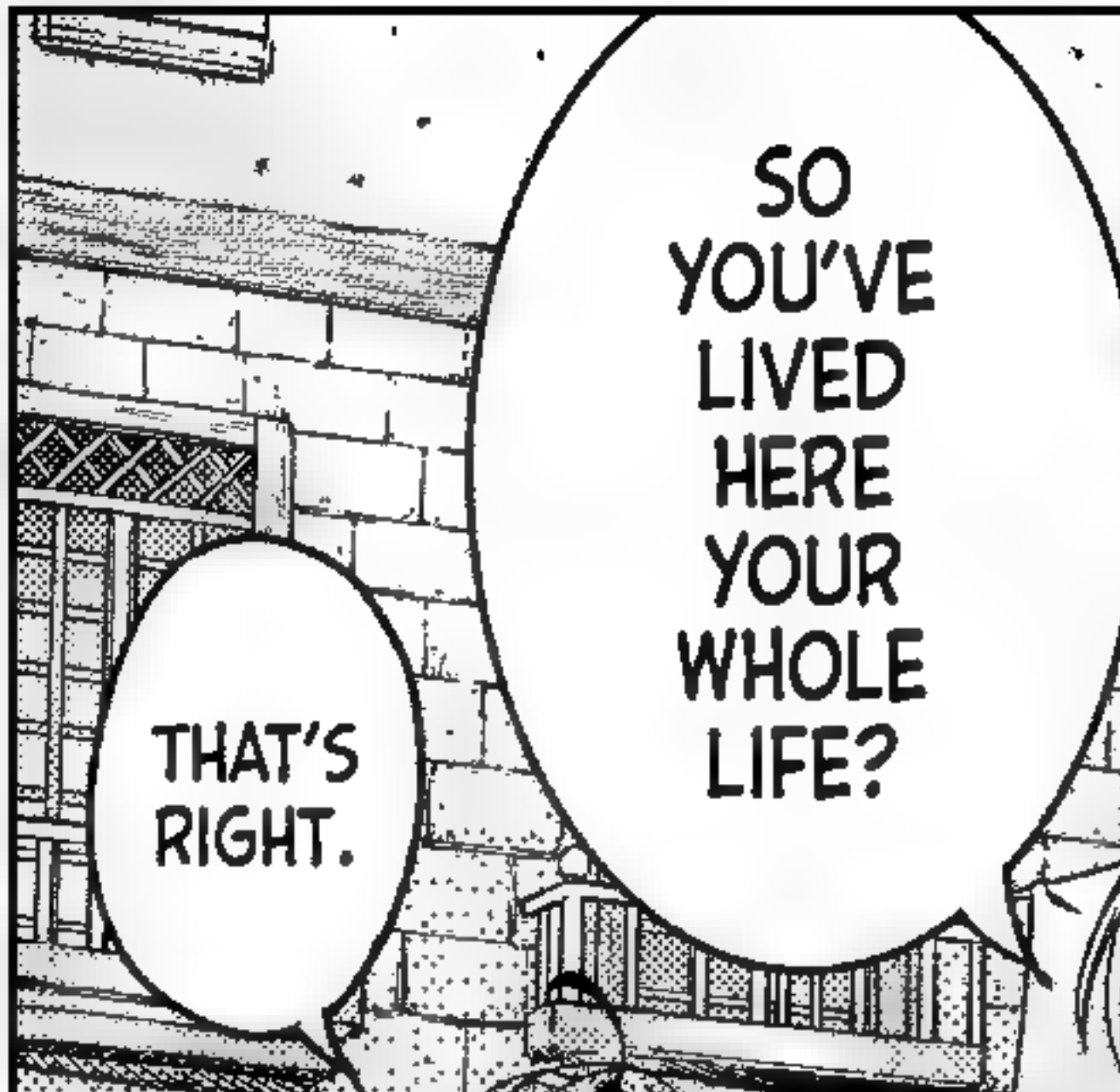




HEY ...



You're so lucky!



SO YOU'VE LIVED HERE YOUR WHOLE LIFE?

THAT'S RIGHT.



WOW!

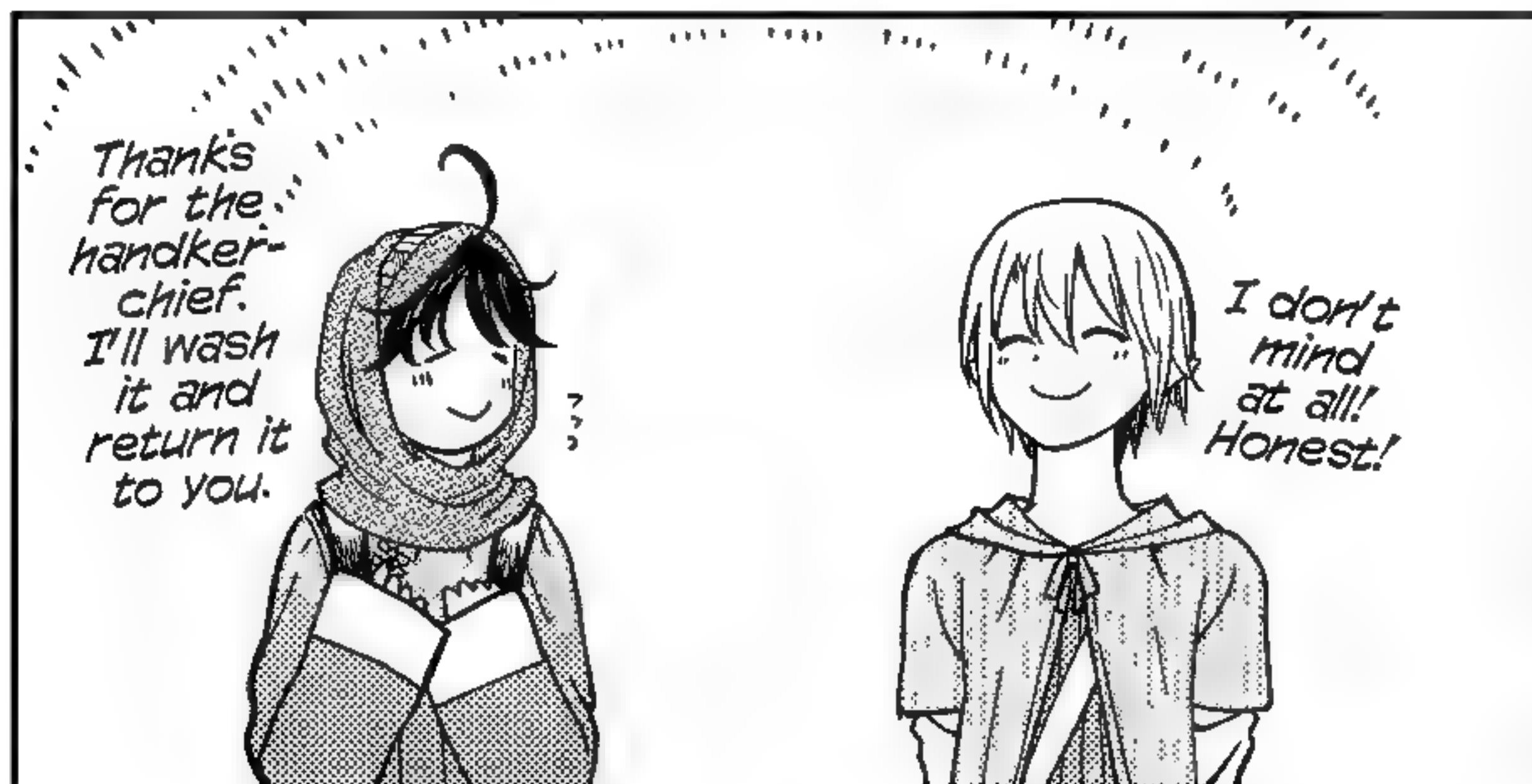


I DIDN'T REALLY MEAN THAT.

I'M SORRY I SAID KAFNA IS A JOB THAT BELONGS TO WOMEN.



I'M PROUD OF HAVING GROWN UP IN A TOWN FULL OF BOOKS!



Thanks for the handkerchief. I'll wash it and return it to you.

I don't mind at all! Honest!



?!

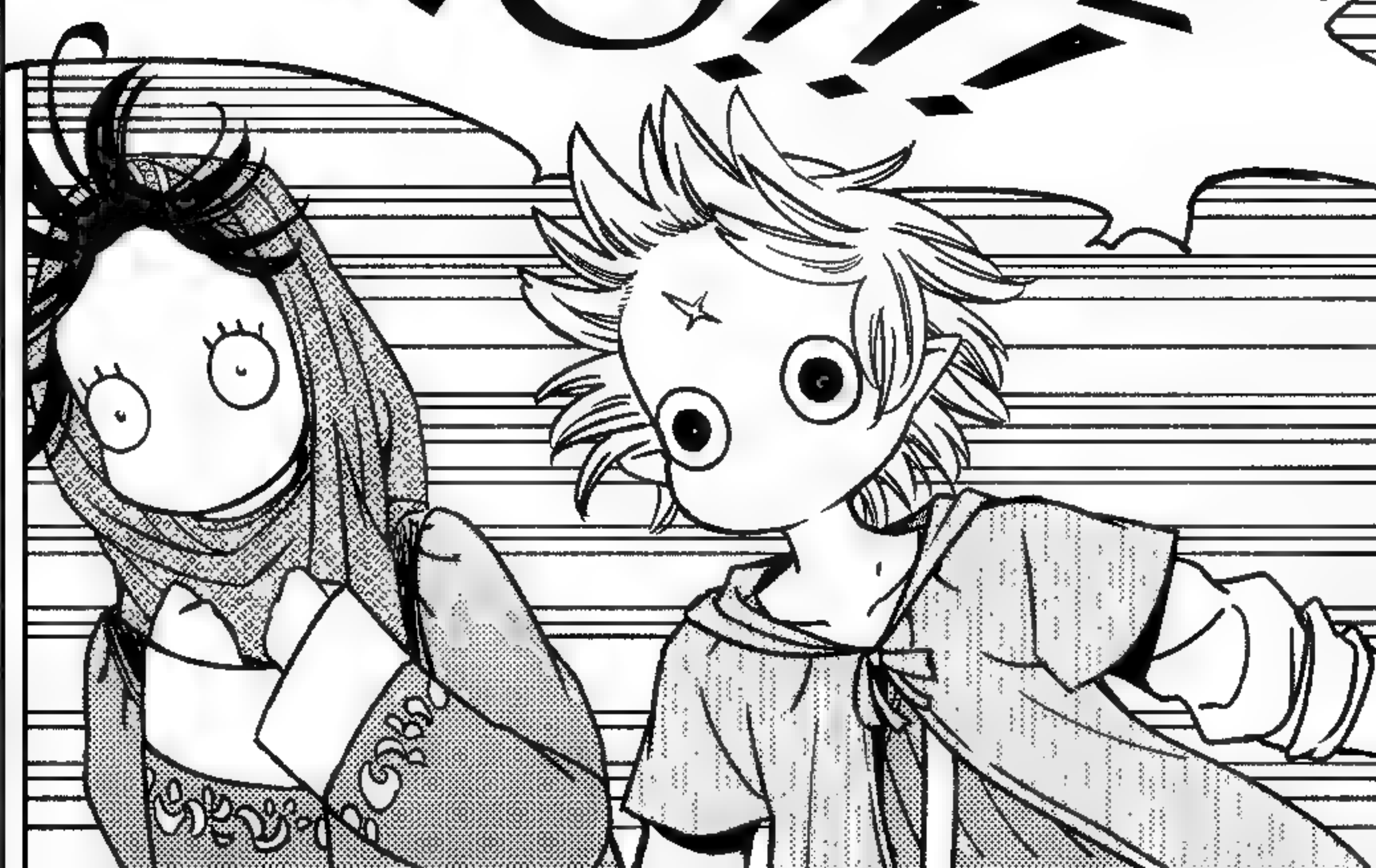


THMP  
THMP  
THMP

GET THEM!



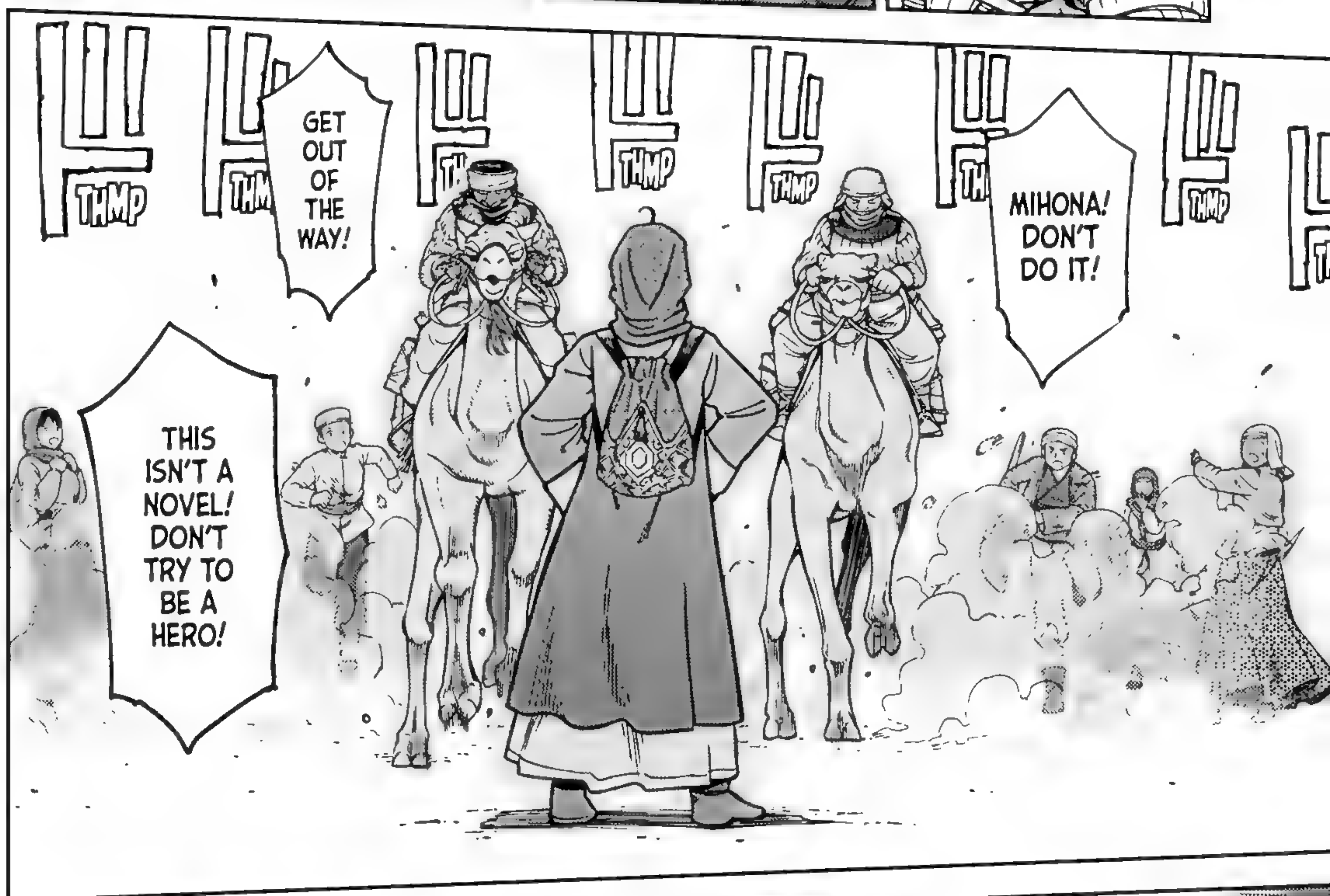
STOP THOSE TWO!!!



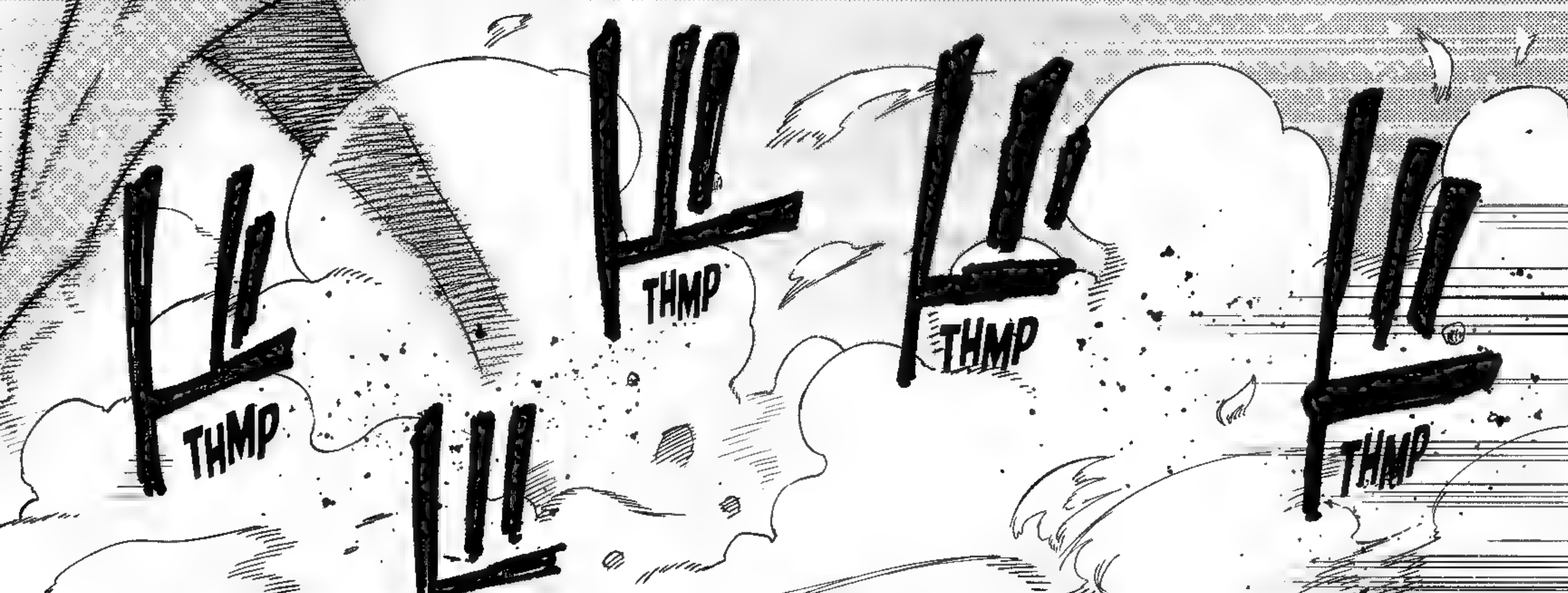








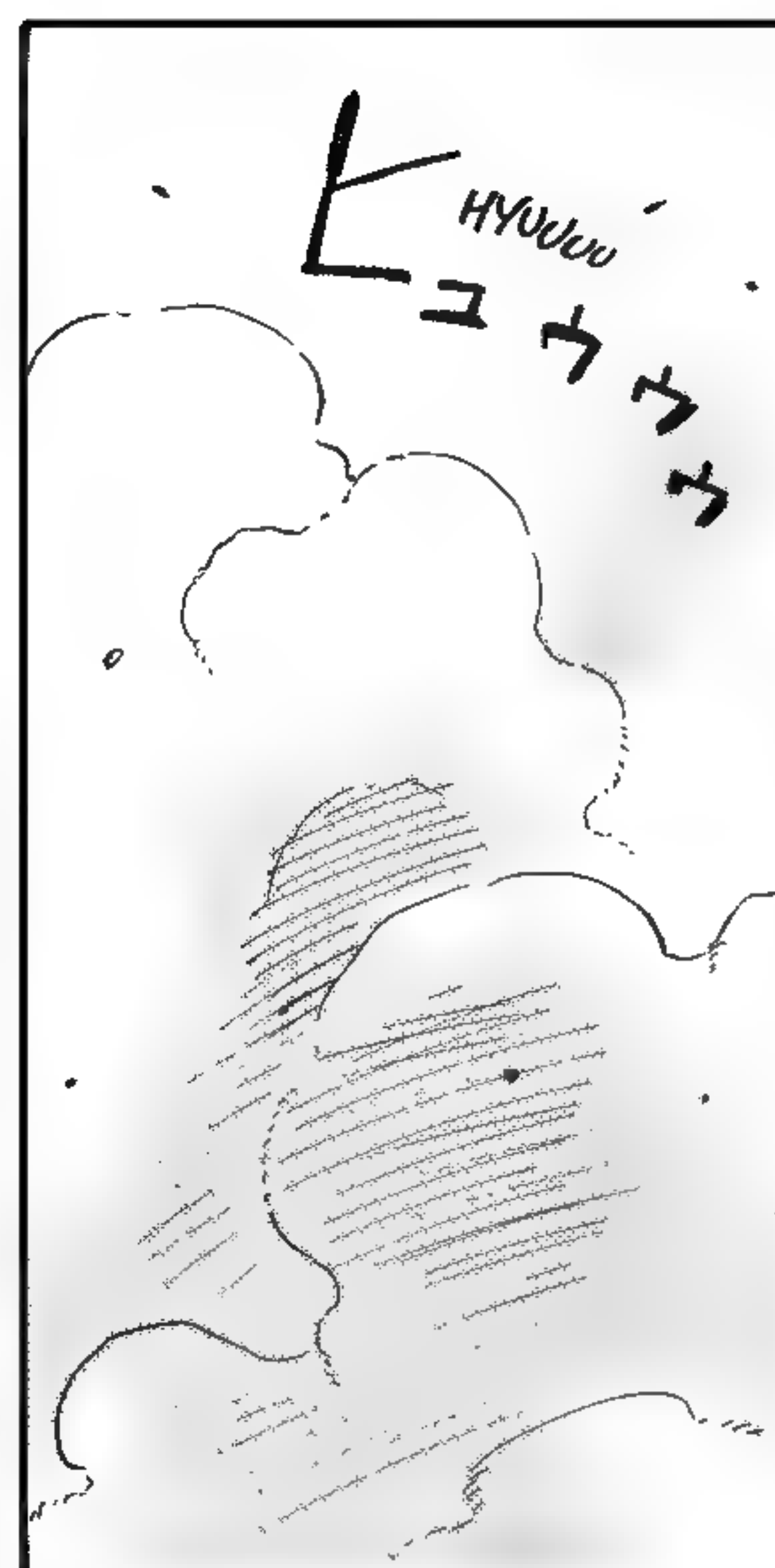




Were they trying to kill me?!

THEY DIDN'T EVEN SLOW DOWN ...

WHAT WERE YOU THINKING ?!

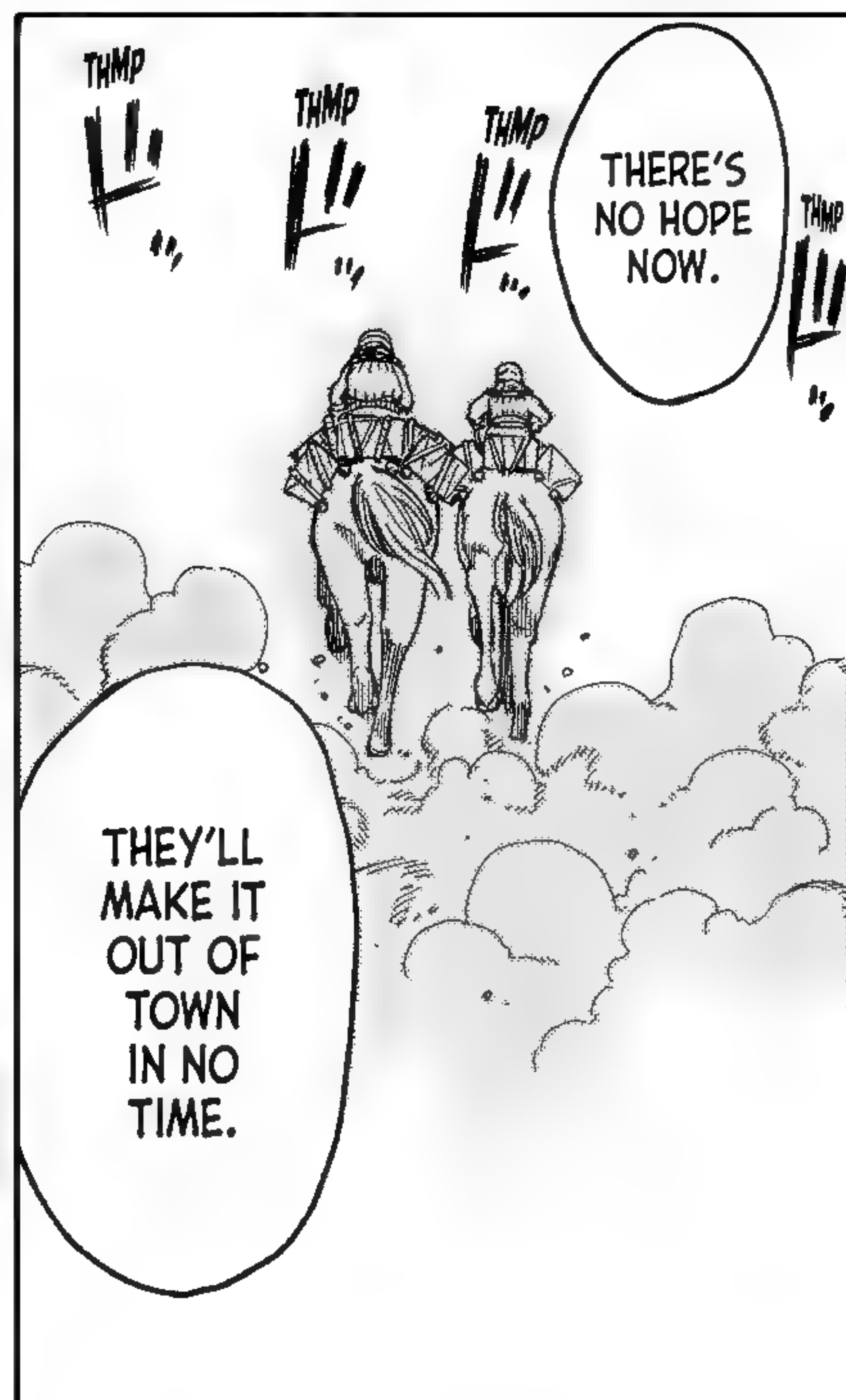


THEY STEAL NEW BOOKS ABOUT TO GO ON SALE AND SELL THEM OFF.

RELEASE DAY BANDITS.

STOP, THIEVES!

WHO ARE THOSE PEOPLE ?!



THMP

THMP

THMP

THERE'S NO HOPE NOW.

THMP

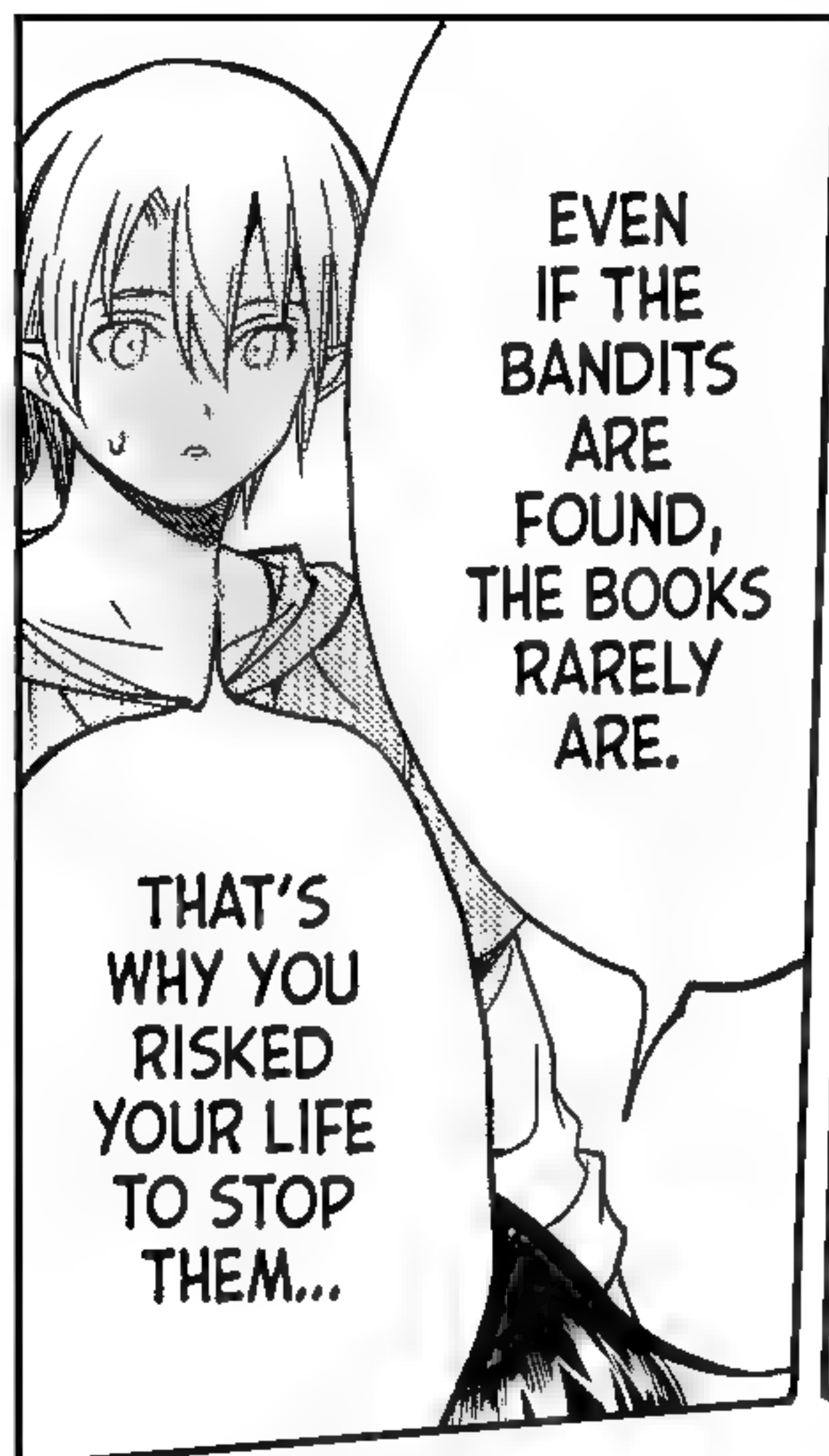


ONCE THEY MAKE IT OUT OF TOWN, THERE'S NO HOPE OF GETTING THE BOOKS BACK.

THE CITIES HAVE CRIMES LIKE THAT?!

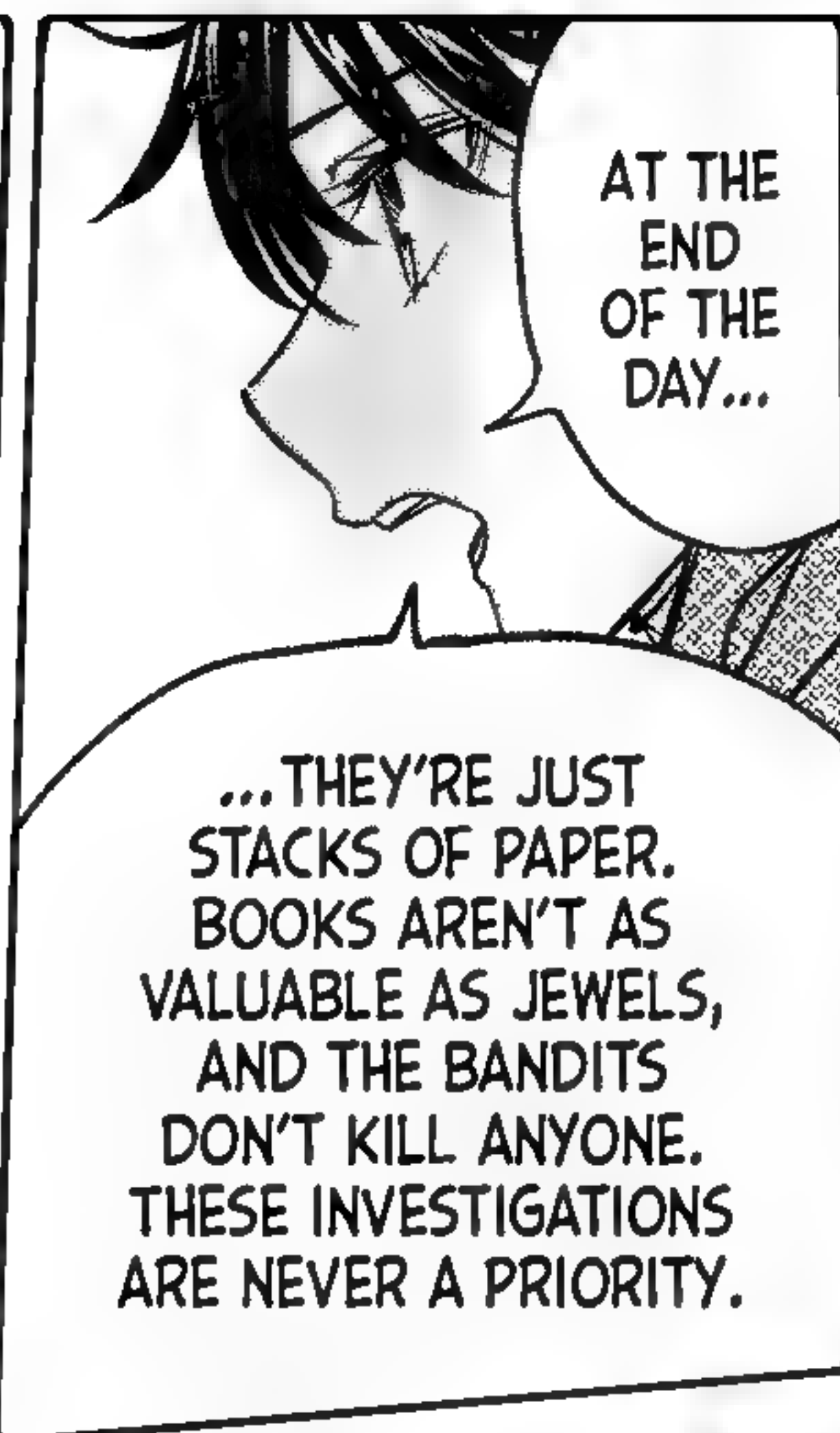
THEY'LL MAKE IT OUT OF TOWN IN NO TIME.





EVEN IF THE BANDITS ARE FOUND, THE BOOKS RARELY ARE.

THAT'S WHY YOU RISKED YOUR LIFE TO STOP THEM...



AT THE END OF THE DAY...

...THEY'RE JUST STACKS OF PAPER. BOOKS AREN'T AS VALUABLE AS JEWELS, AND THE BANDITS DON'T KILL ANYONE. THESE INVESTIGATIONS ARE NEVER A PRIORITY.



WHY NOT ?!

IT WON'T.

WHY NOT? SURELY THE CAPITAL GUARD WILL ROUND THEM UP!



THE BLACK MARKET IS FOREVER OUT OF REACH FOR THE COMMON PEOPLE.

...WAIT PATIENTLY IN LINE FOR A BOOK THEY'LL NEVER BE ABLE TO BUY.

MEANWHILE, HONEST SHOPPERS ...



...AND NOBLES WILL SNAP THEM UP. THAT'S THE PROBLEM.

ONCE THEY ESCAPE, THEY'LL GET THE BOOKS ONTO THE BLACK MARKET...

IT'S BECAUSE THERE ARE BUYERS THAT THE BANDITS KEEP STEALING!



DO YOU REALIZE HOW MANY DOZENS OF BOOKS THEY HAVE TO SELL TO MAKE UP FOR EACH ONE STOLEN? IT'S ENOUGH TO DRIVE THEM OUT OF BUSINESS!!!

...IS WHAT IT DOES TO THE BOOKSELLERS TRYING TO BRING MATERIAL TO THE PEOPLE AS CHEAPLY AS THEY CAN!

AND WORST OF ALL ...





HALT,  
THIEVES!



D-DO  
I TRY  
TO  
STOP  
THEM  
...?

*I can't  
believe  
this is  
happening.*



HAH! A  
LITTLE  
LATE  
FOR  
THAT!

WE'LL BE  
LONG GONE  
BEFORE THEY  
ARRIVE!



GET  
BACK  
HERE,  
THIEVES  
!

ALERT  
THE  
TOWN  
GUARD  
!!



WAAAAAH!

DOES  
THIS  
MEAN  
WE  
CAN'T  
BUY OUR  
BOOKS?



I  
MUST  
JOIN  
IN THE  
CHASE.

I'M GONNA  
MAKE THOSE  
TWO REGRET  
THEY EVER SET  
FOOT IN OUR  
TOWN!

NO. THIS  
IS NO TIME  
TO DE-  
SPAIR.

HMPH  
!!

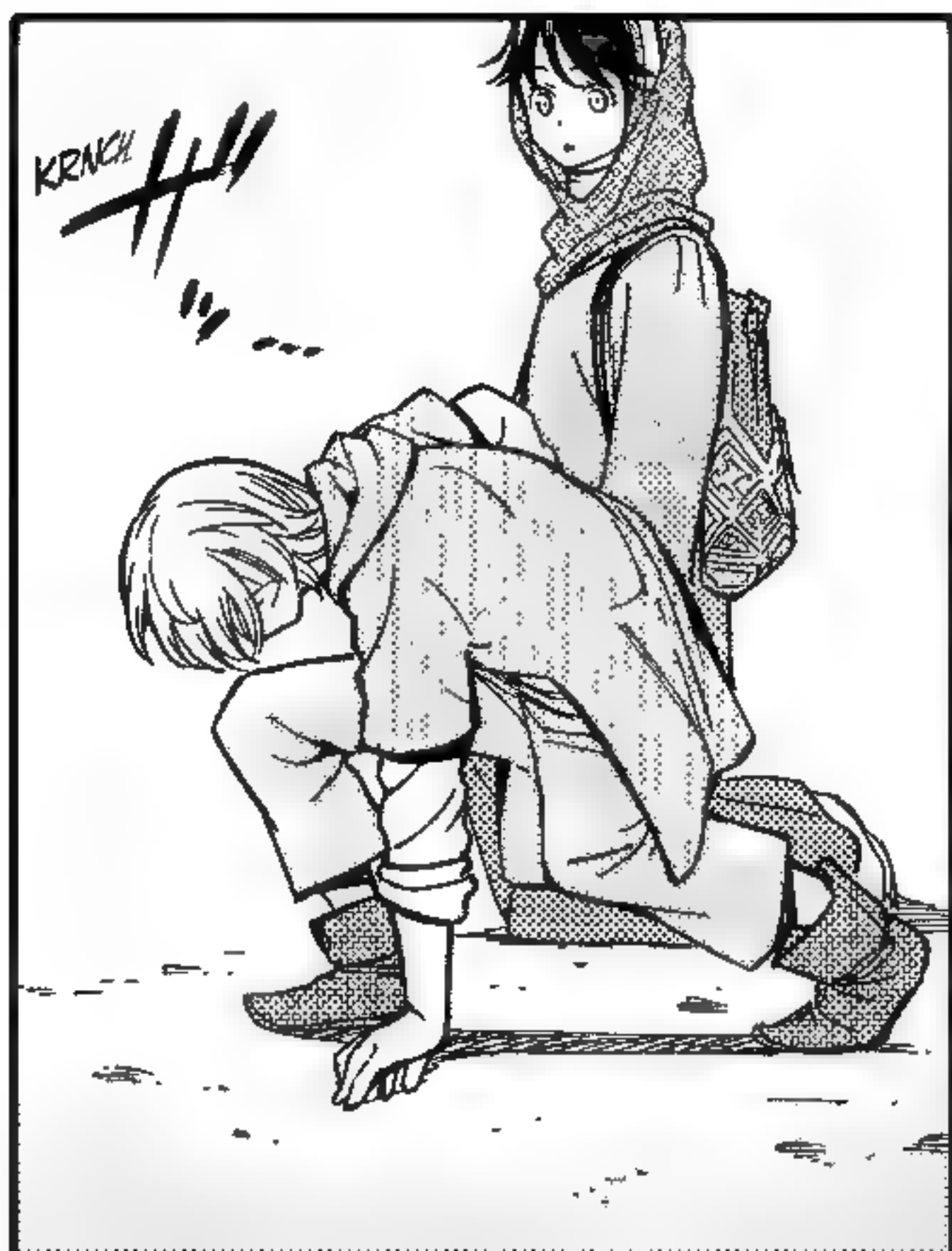
FWSSHH

STOP, THEM!

FWISH



HUH  
?



KRACH

...

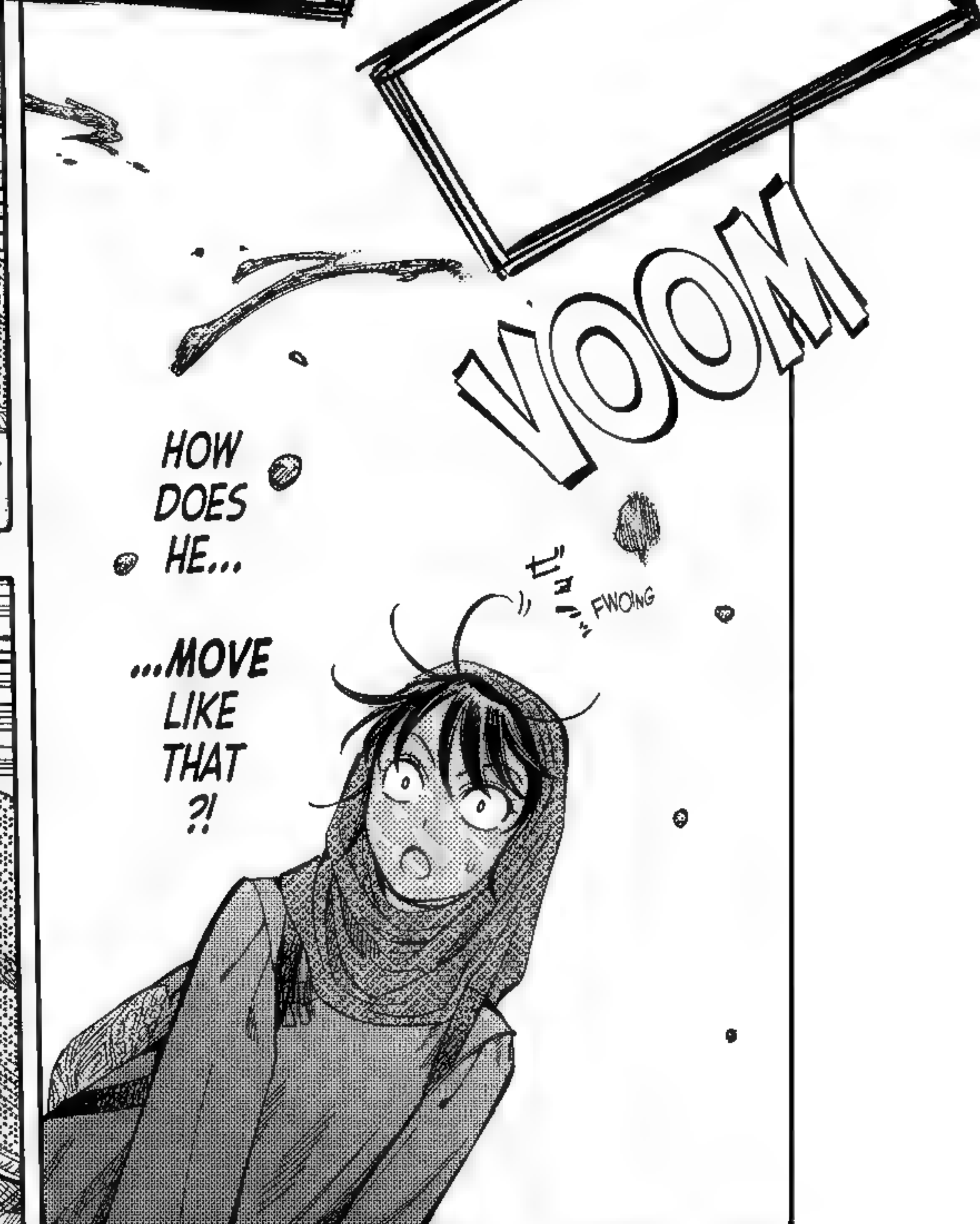
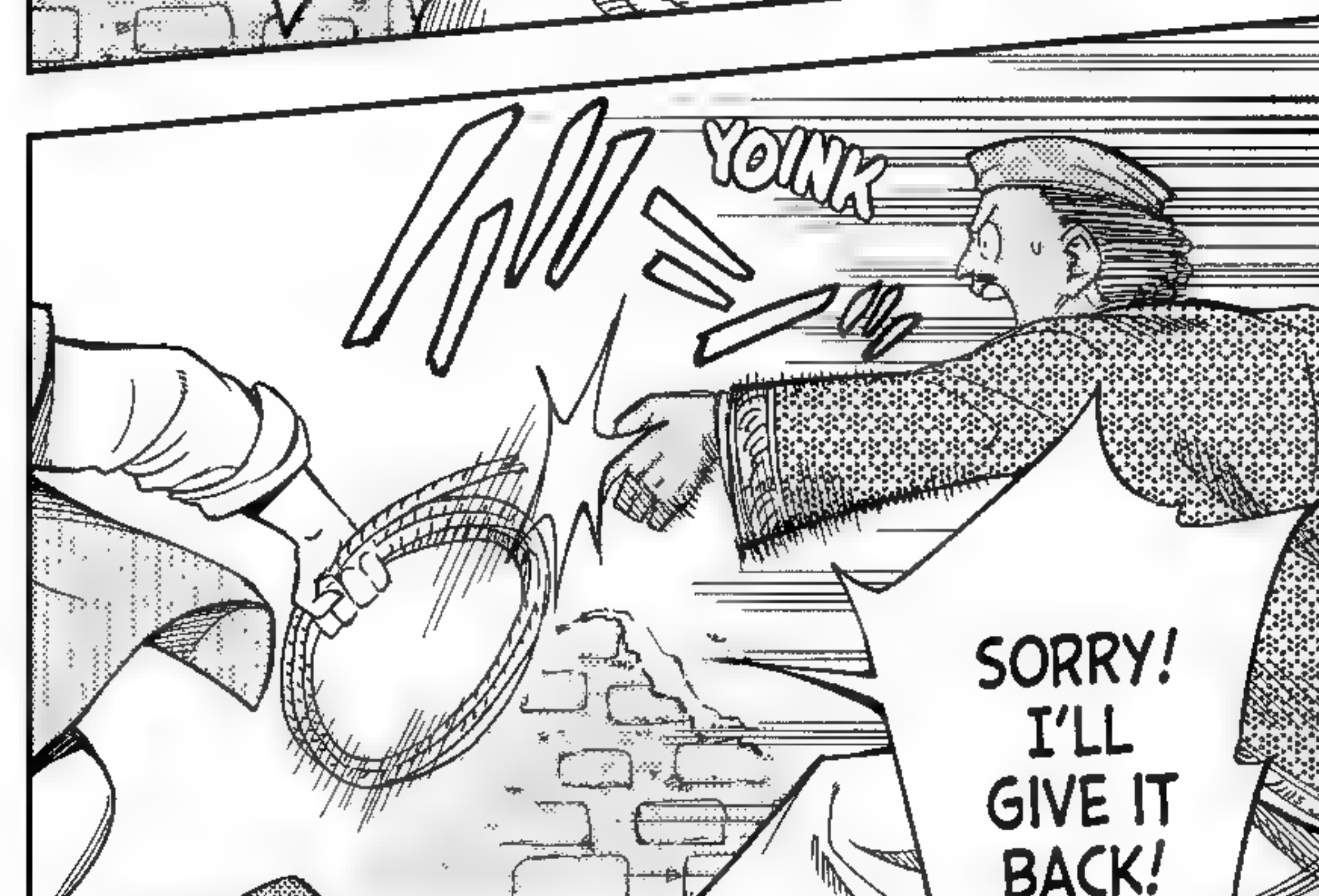


...LOVE  
BOOKS,  
DON'T  
YOU?

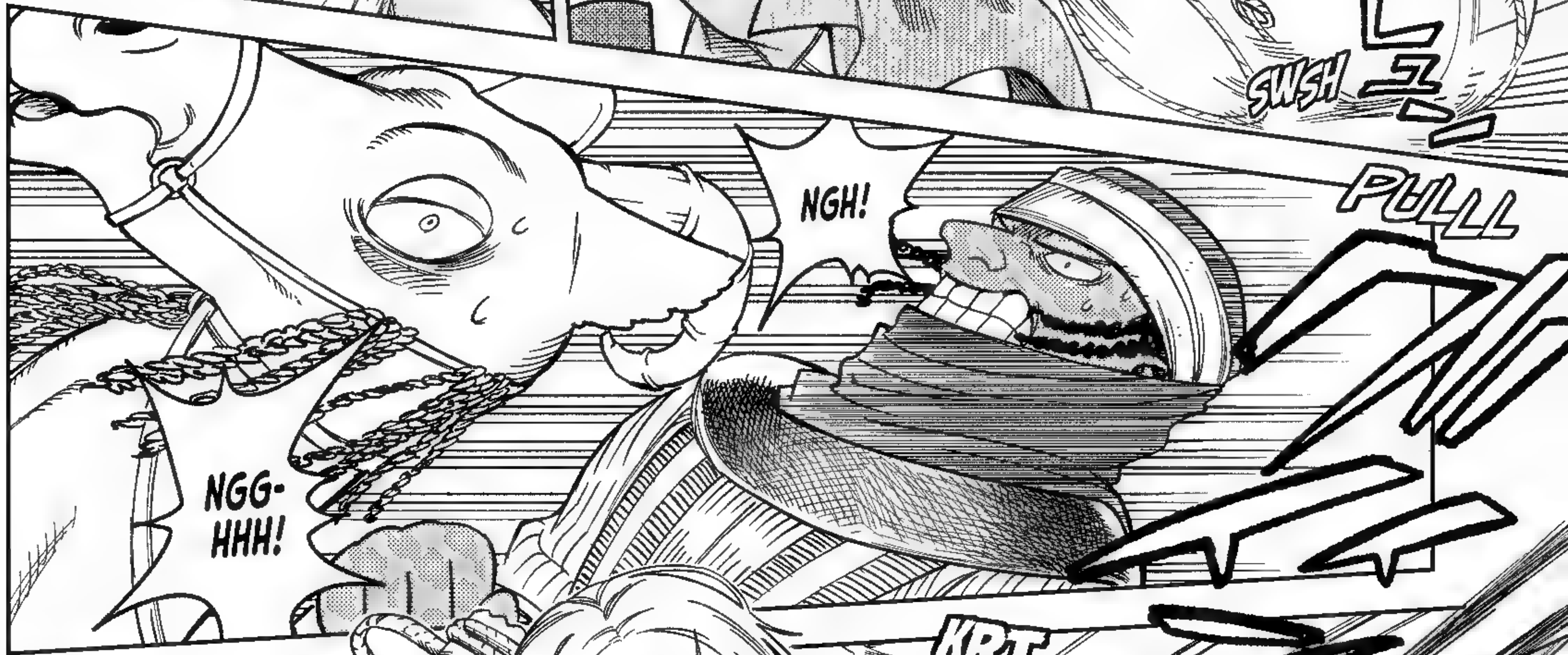
YOU  
REALLY  
...



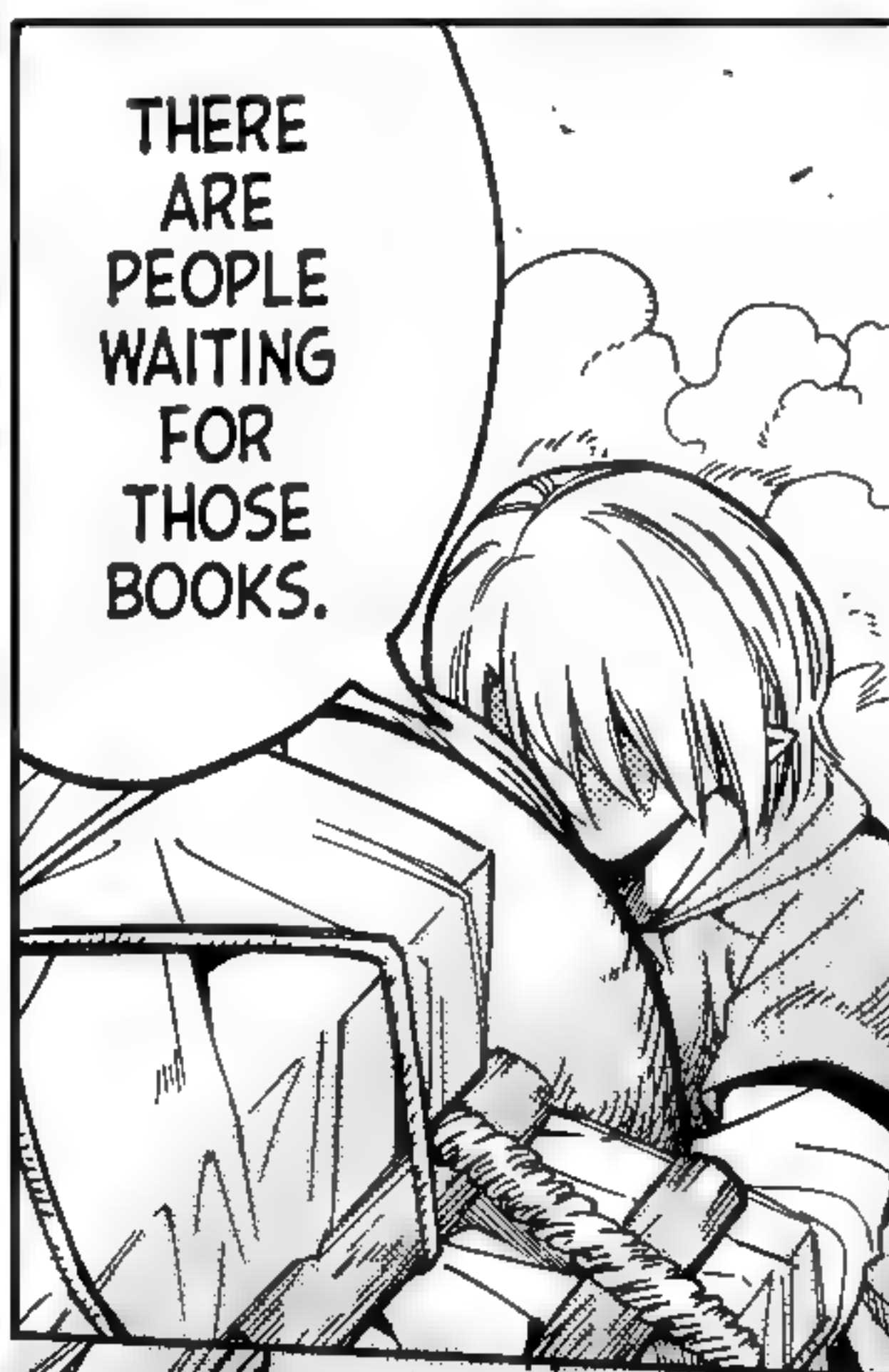
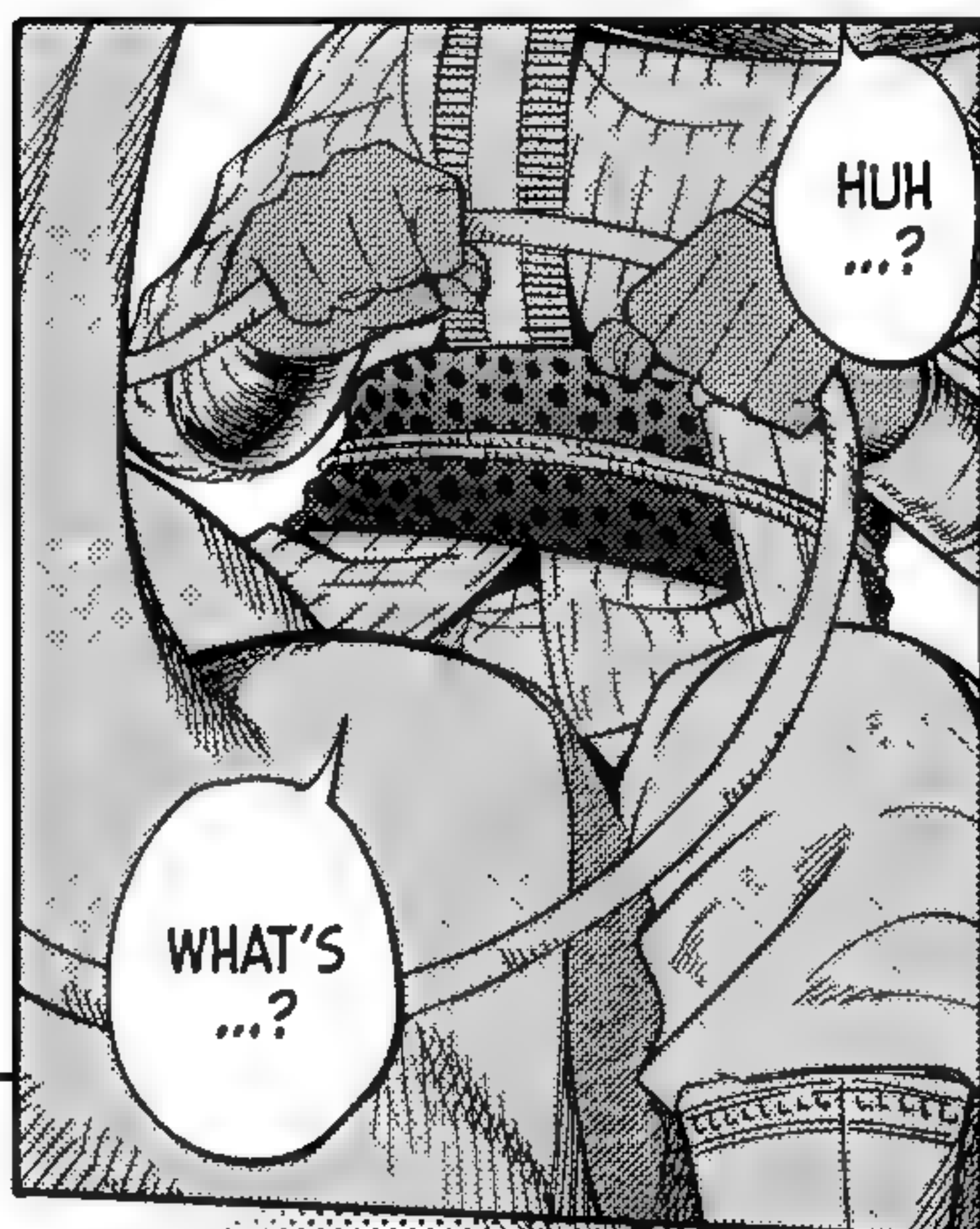
















THIS

CAN'T

BE

HAP-

PEN-

ING!

AAUGH!!

OOF!

THERE  
WE  
GO.

OWWW  
...

WHUMP

F+!





**LITTLE  
BRAT  
!!**







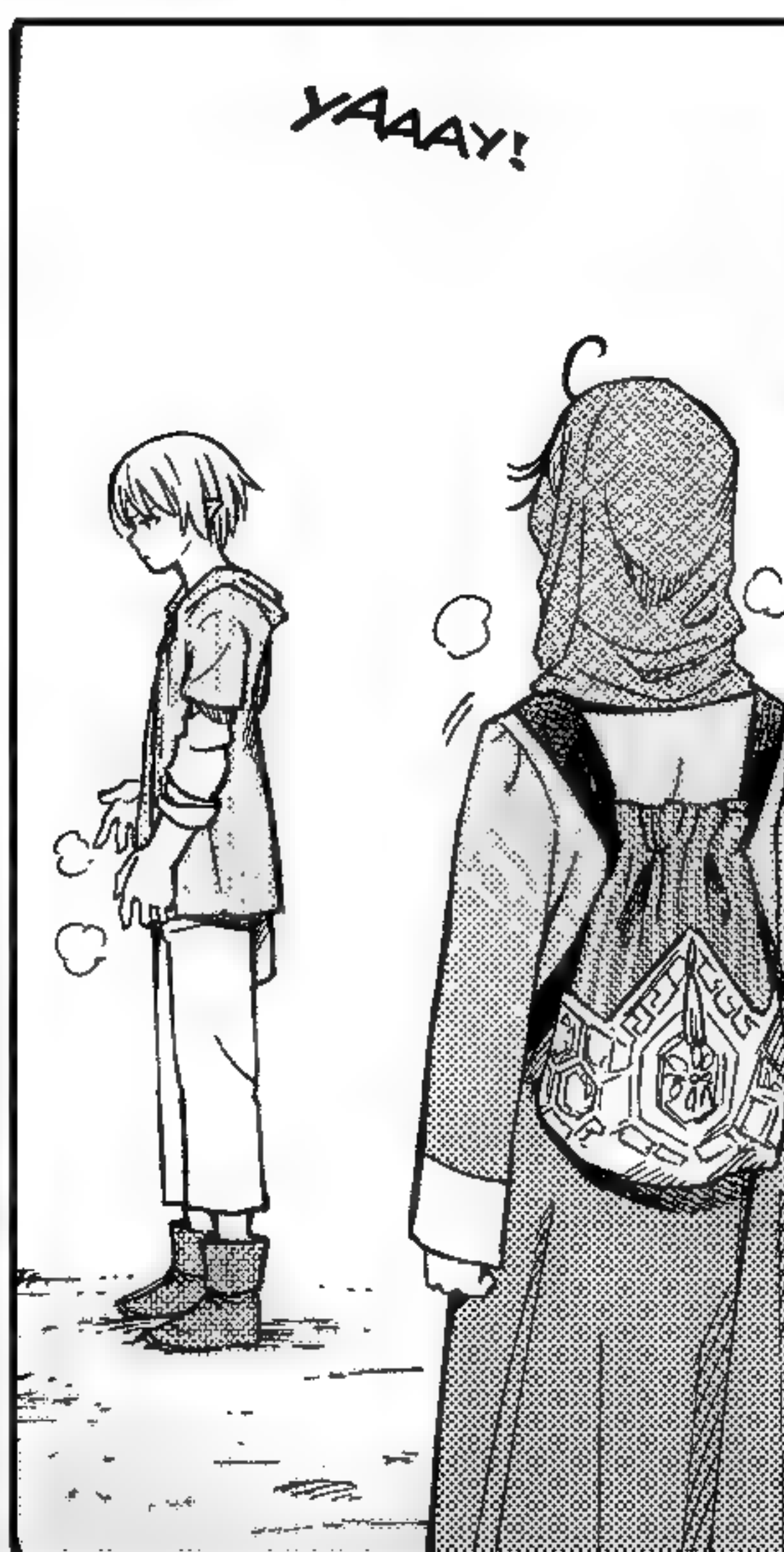
...KNOW THAT  
I ONLY NEED  
MOVE MY HAND  
A FRACTION  
MORE TO  
BREAK YOUR  
BONE.

I DO NOT  
WISH TO  
HARM YOU.  
HOWEVER...

ALL  
RIGHT!  
JUST  
STOP!

I'D SAY  
THE BEST  
COURSE OF  
ACTION  
FOR US  
BOTH IS TO  
WAIT HERE  
QUIETLY.

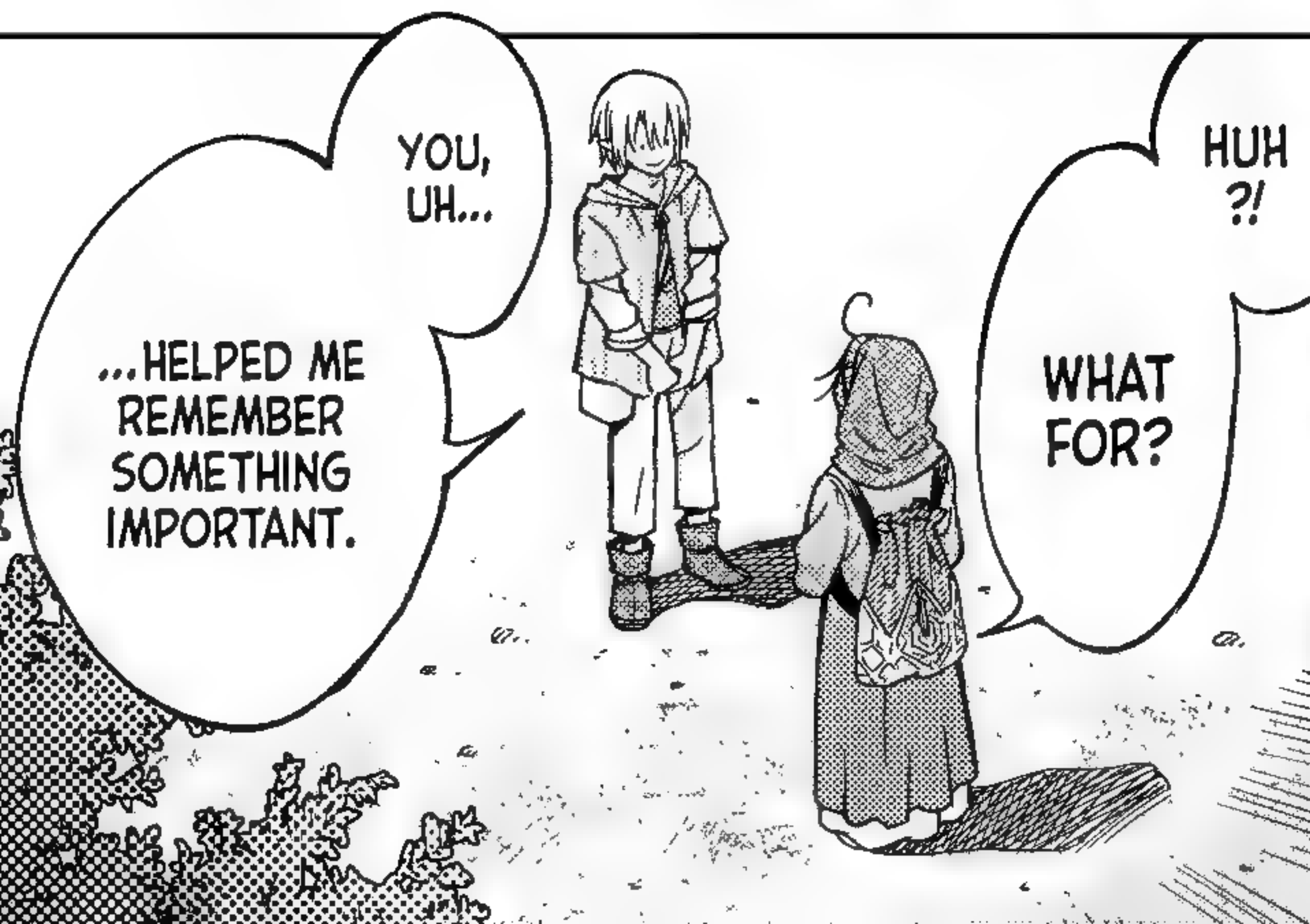
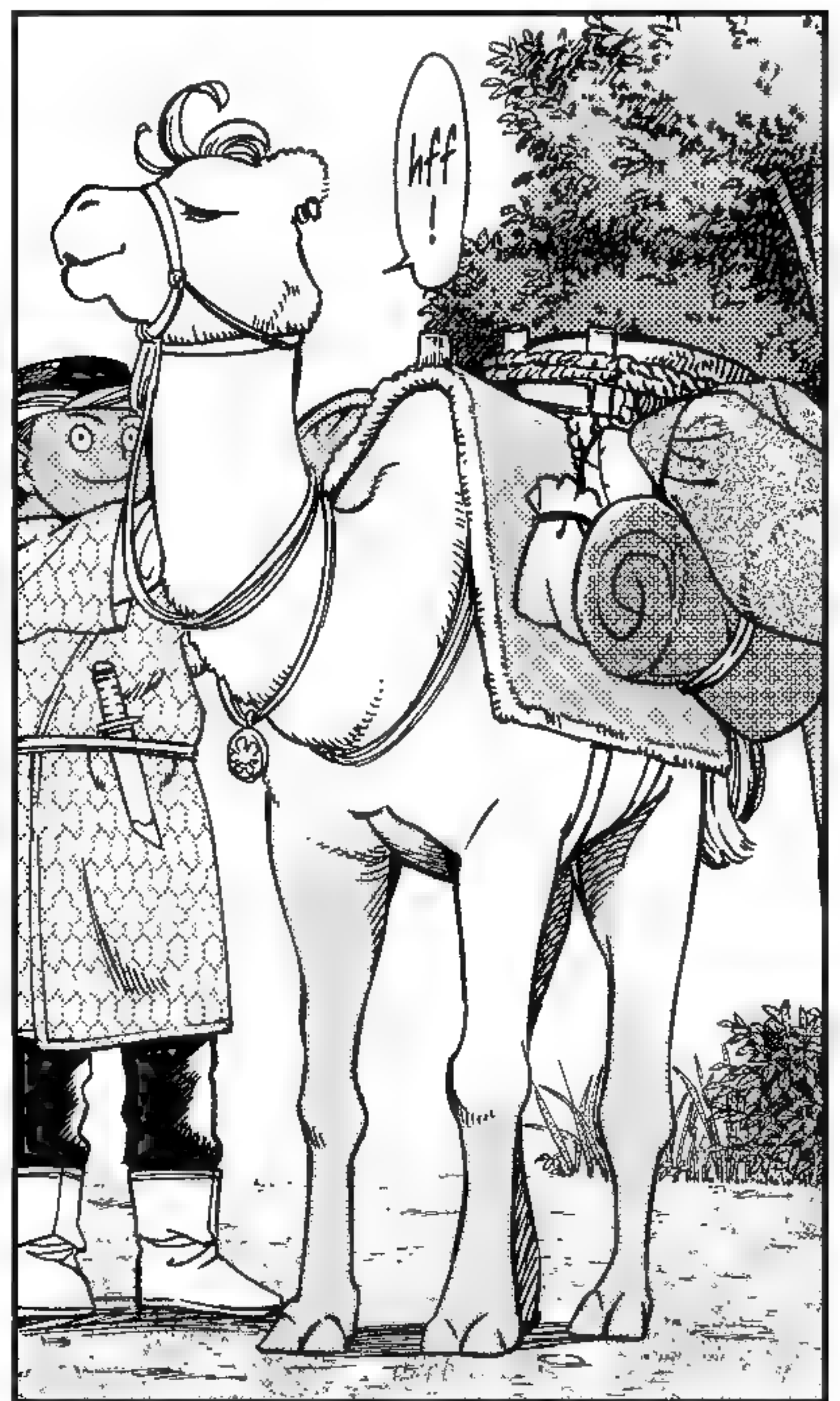




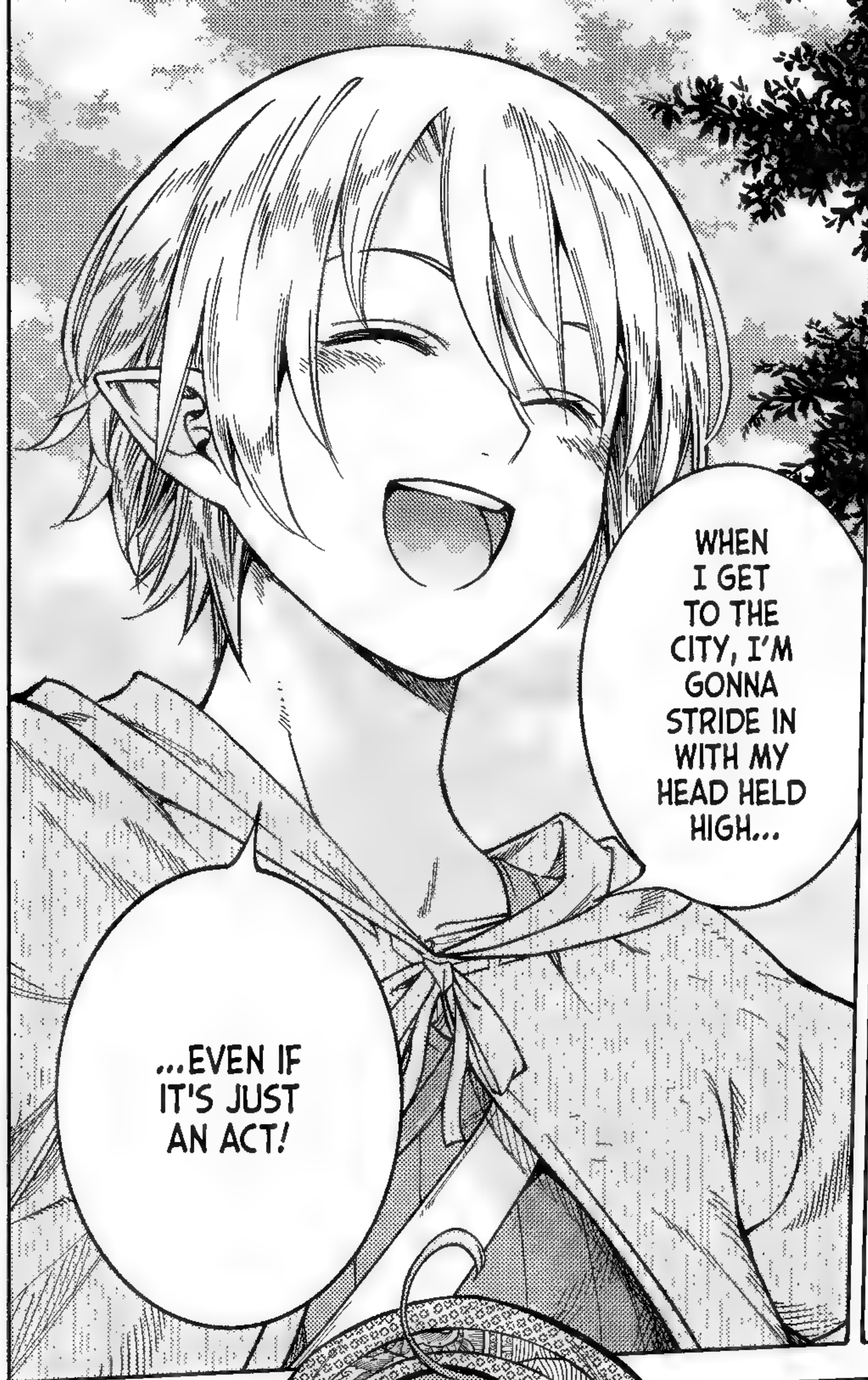












...EVEN IF  
IT'S JUST  
AN ACT!

WHEN  
I GET  
TO THE  
CITY, I'M  
GONNA  
STRIDE IN  
WITH MY  
HEAD HELD  
HIGH...

THE  
CLOSER  
WE GOT TO  
AFTZAAK,  
THE MORE  
ANXIOUS  
I FELT.

I WASN'T  
FEELING  
CONFIDENT  
ABOUT THE  
EXAM.



BUT  
MEETING  
YOU  
REMINDED  
ME OF  
SOMETHING  
I ONCE  
HEARD.

ABOUT  
HOW FATE  
BEGINS  
WITH  
ACTION.



I'M  
MIHONA  
QOAHU.

I JUST  
REALIZED  
I NEVER  
GAVE  
YOU MY  
NAME.



*Time  
to put  
on a  
show!*

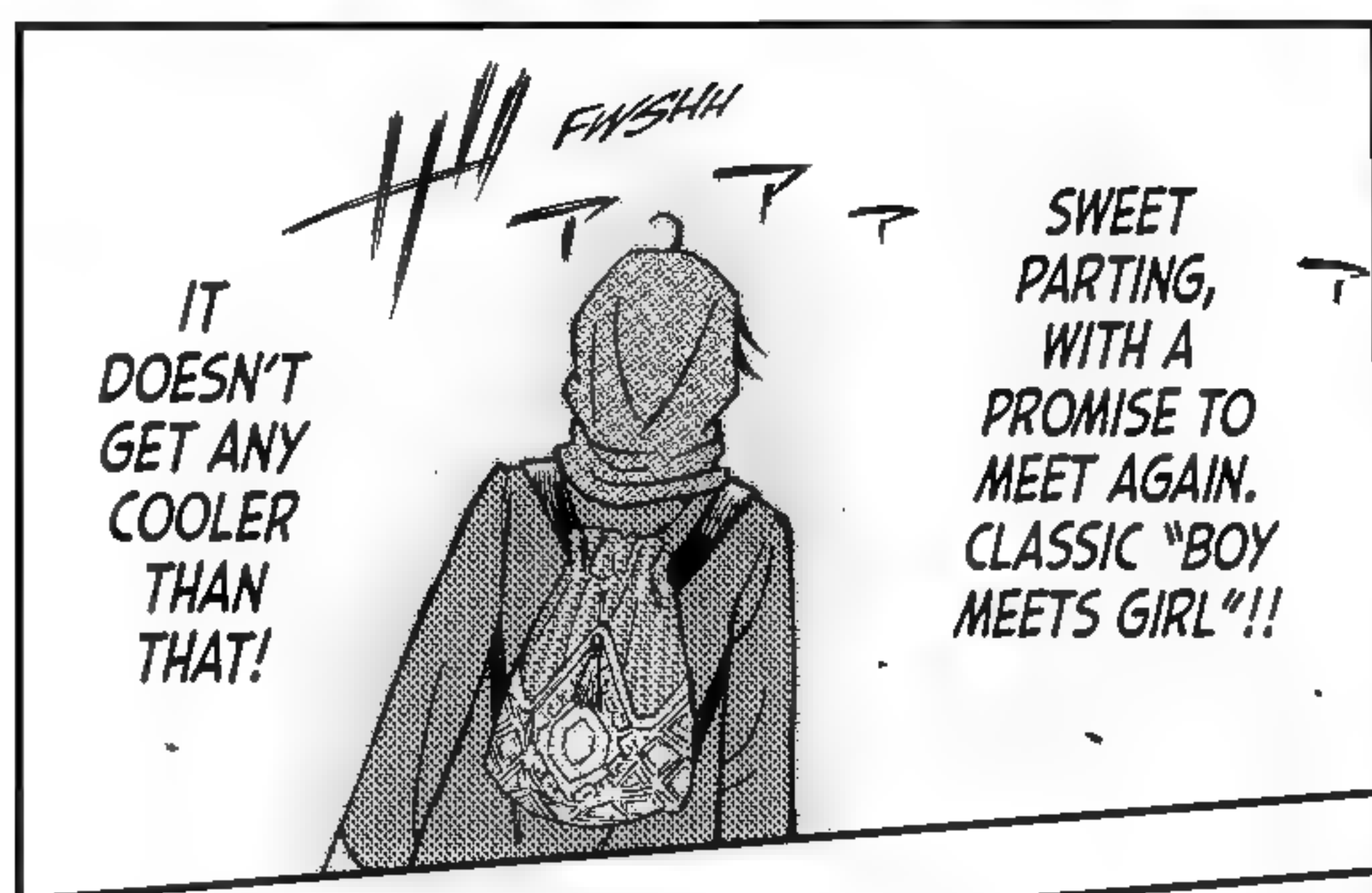






GLAD  
TO MAKE  
YOUR  
ACQUAIN-  
TANCE,  
THEO  
FUMIS.

AND THE  
NEXT TIME  
WE MEET,  
MAY IT  
BE AS  
KAFNA.



IT  
DOESN'T  
GET ANY  
COOLER  
THAN  
THAT!

SWEET  
PARTING,  
WITH A  
PROMISE TO  
MEET AGAIN.  
CLASSIC "BOY  
MEETS GIRL"!!



BUT  
WE'RE  
BOTH  
...

...  
GOING  
THE  
SAME  
WAY  
...



NOW  
THIS  
TIME, I  
DEFINITELY  
NAILED IT!!









Home to a species of mushroom known as "Great Mothers." Travel into the fungal forest must be made with caution, as the dense concentration of spores can damage the lungs.



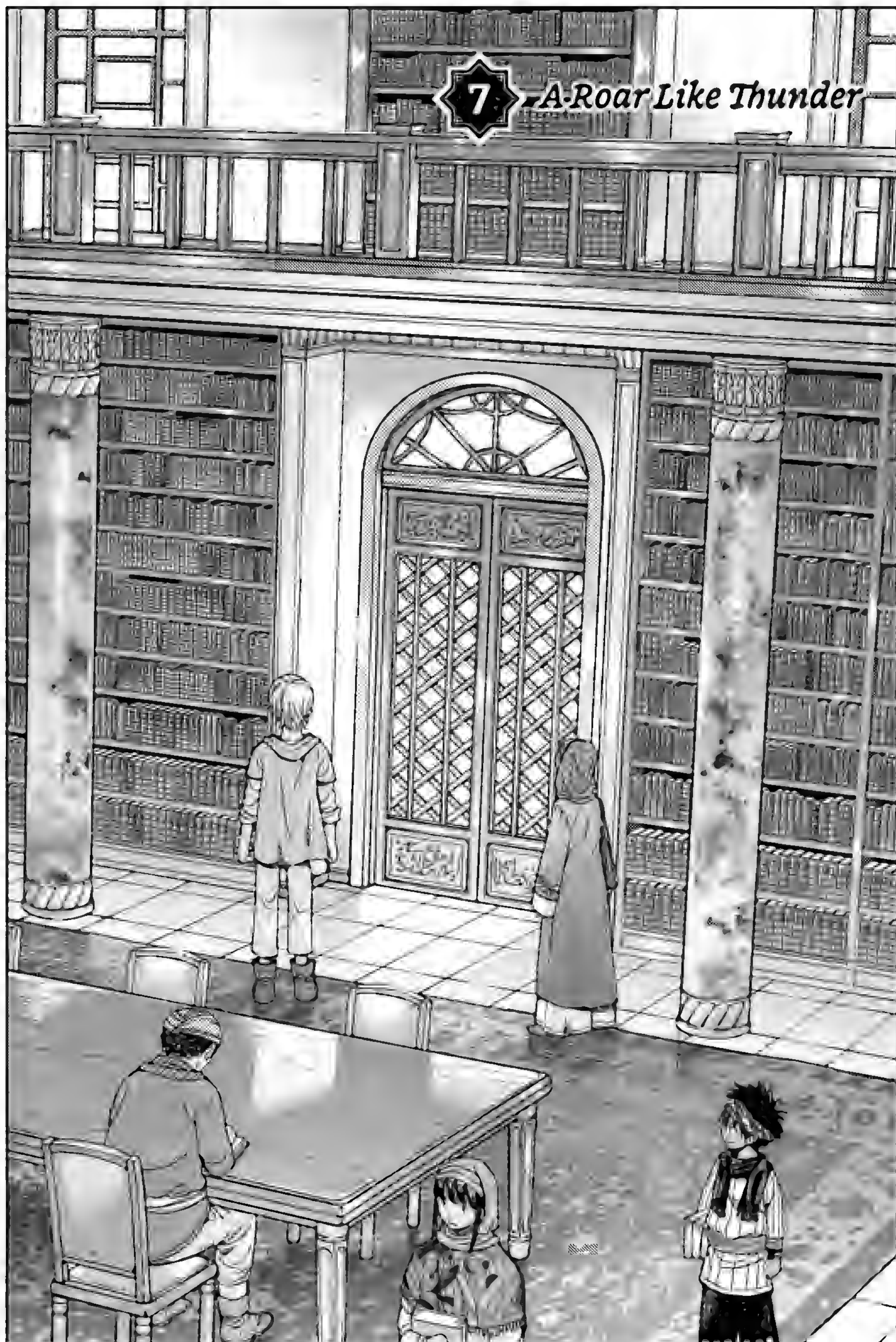


Located at the crest of Mut Down, this massive stone slab is of unknown origin and purpose. The Central Library classifies it as a text and object of academic interest. However, the Hyron government contests the library's claim to the slab, noting that it bears no markings resembling language.









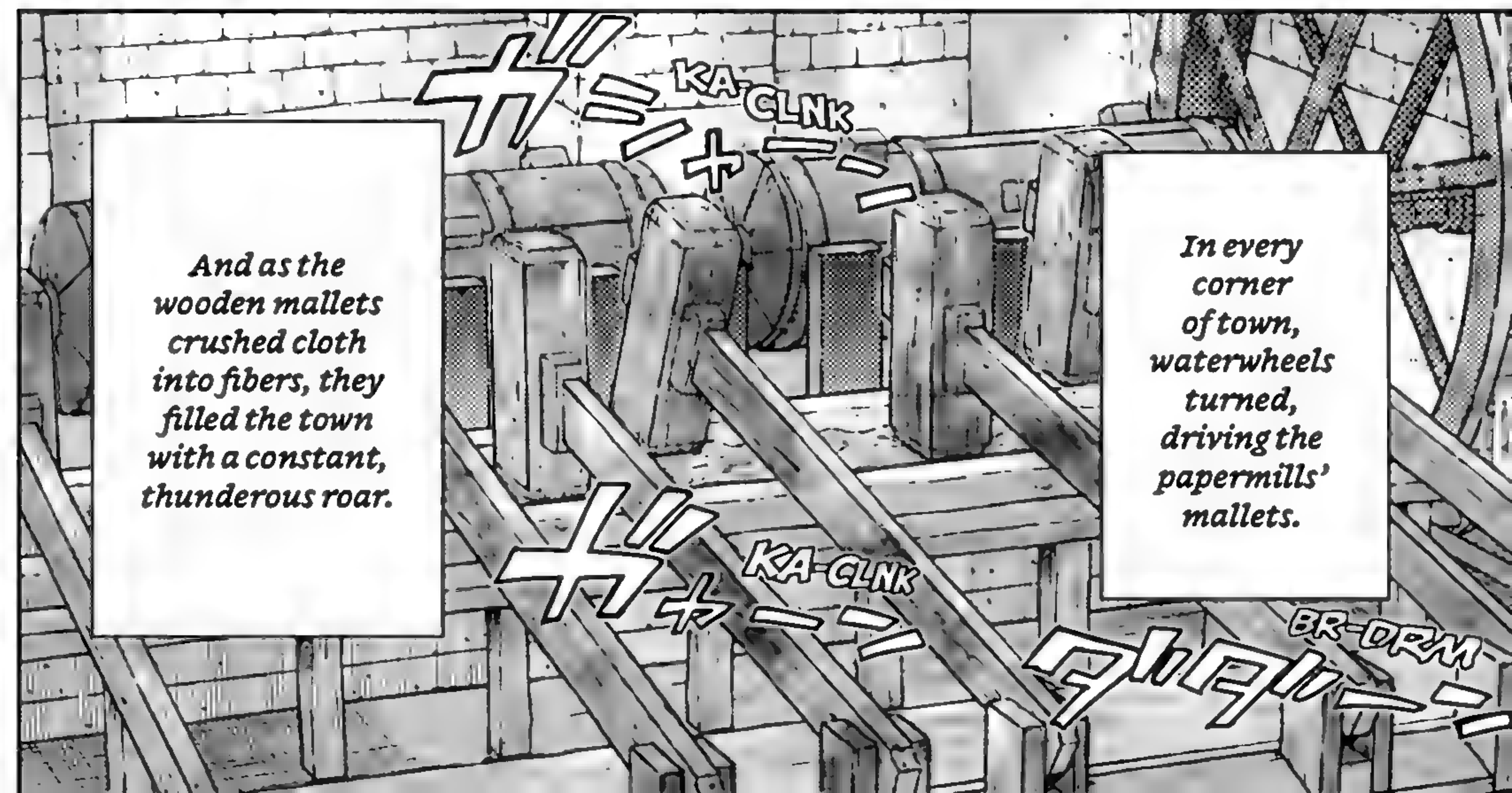
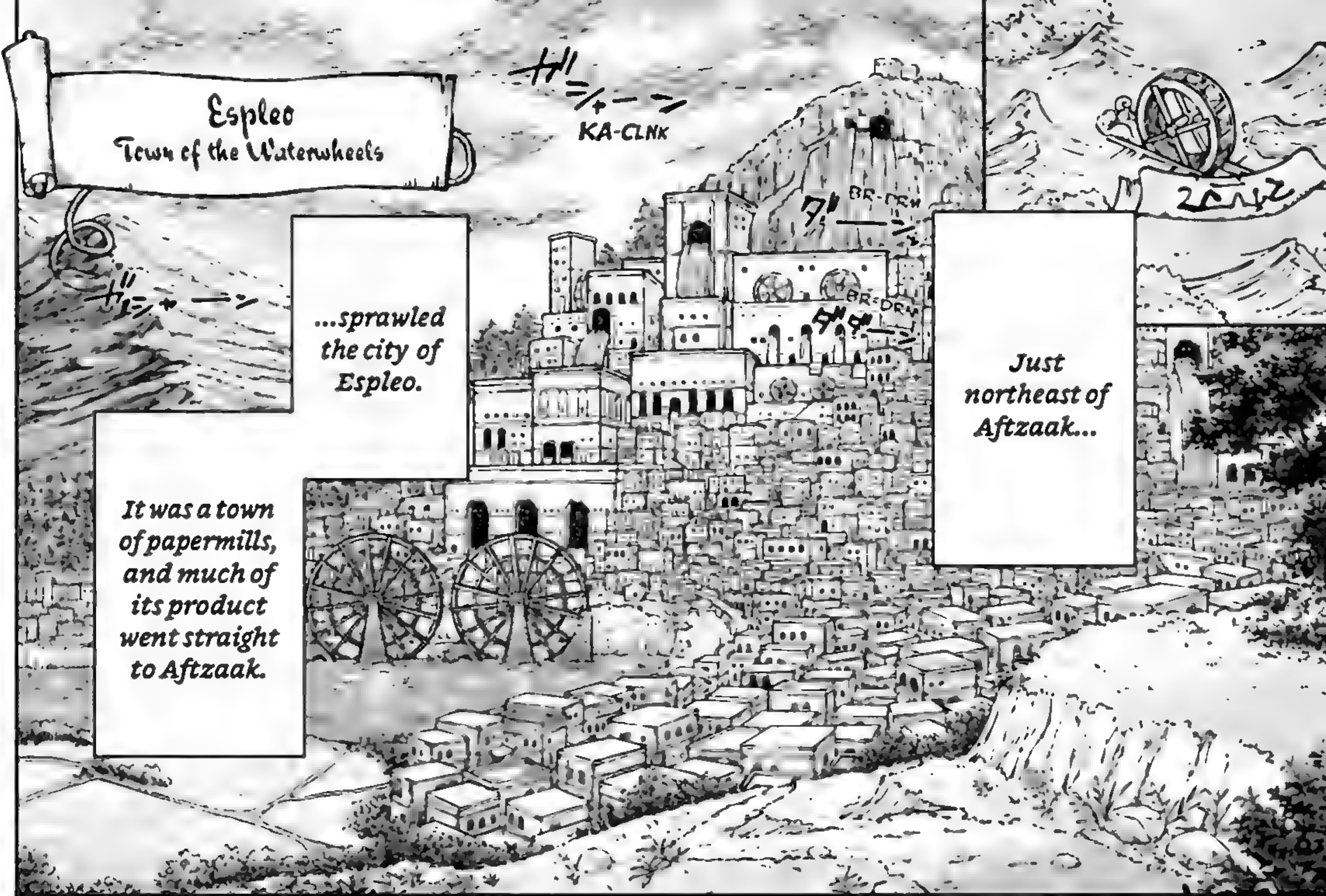
7

A Roar Like Thunder













PRETENDING  
TO KNOW

WOW!  
YOU'RE  
BEEN  
TO THE  
CENTRAL  
LIBRARY,  
MIHONA?

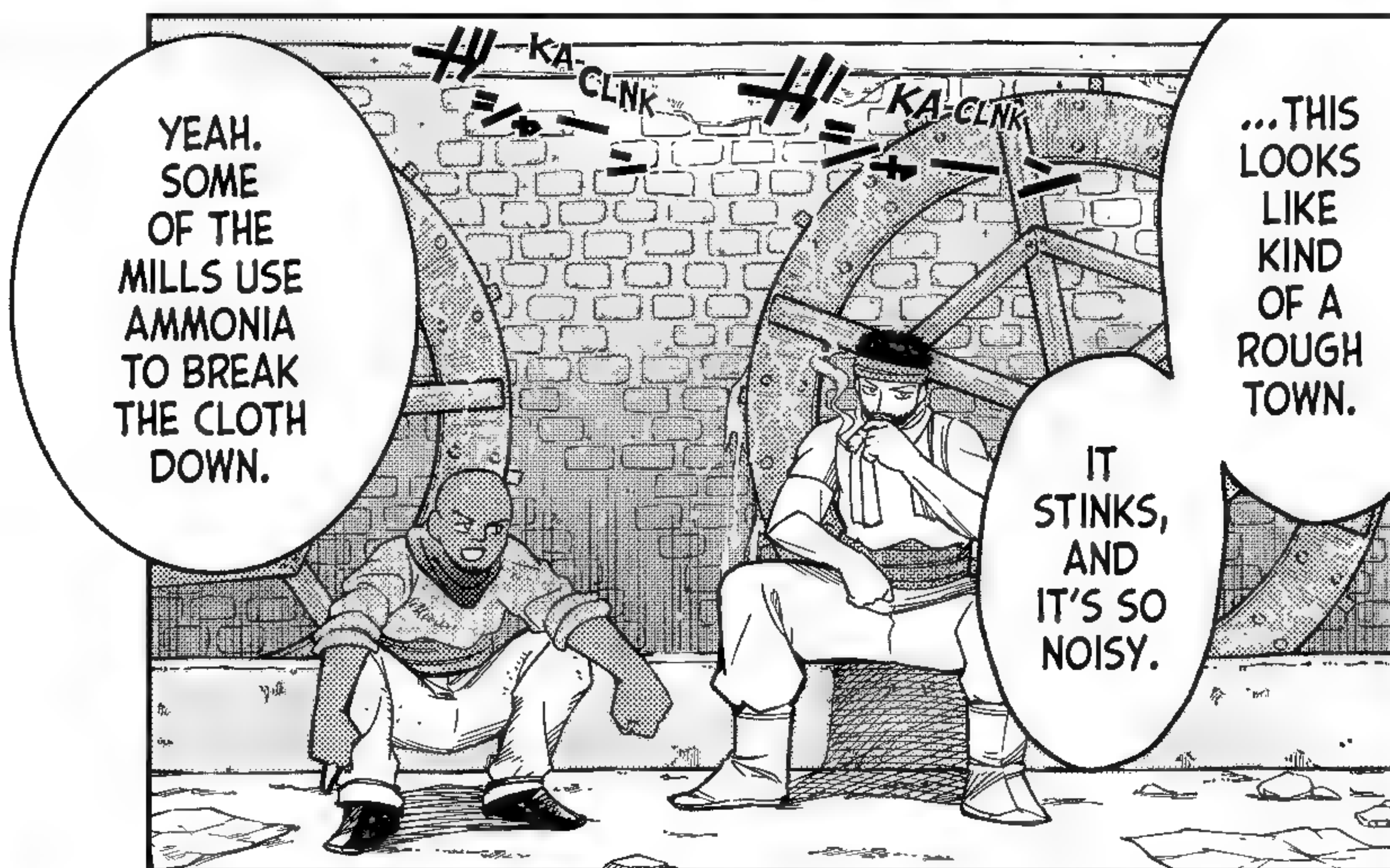
NOPE!



HAH!  
IF A LITTLE  
PLACE LIKE THAT  
GETS YOU EXCITED,  
THE CENTRAL  
LIBRARY'S GONNA  
BLOW YOUR MIND!

WITH  
AFTZAAK  
JUST AROUND  
THE CORNER,  
THE LIBRARIES  
KEEP GETTING  
BIGGER!

THAT  
LIBRARY  
WAS SO  
AMAZING!  
A WALL  
SYSTEM!



YEAH.  
SOME  
OF THE  
MILLS USE  
AMMONIA  
TO BREAK  
THE CLOTH  
DOWN.

...THIS  
LOOKS  
LIKE  
KIND  
OF A  
ROUGH  
TOWN.

IT  
STINKS,  
AND  
IT'S SO  
NOISY.



I HAVE  
TO SAY,  
THOUGH  
...



THE  
EXAM'S  
GETTING  
CLOSE,  
TOO.

ANYWAY,  
WE'VE  
FINISHED  
OUR  
SHOPPING.  
LET'S GET  
OUT OF  
HERE.



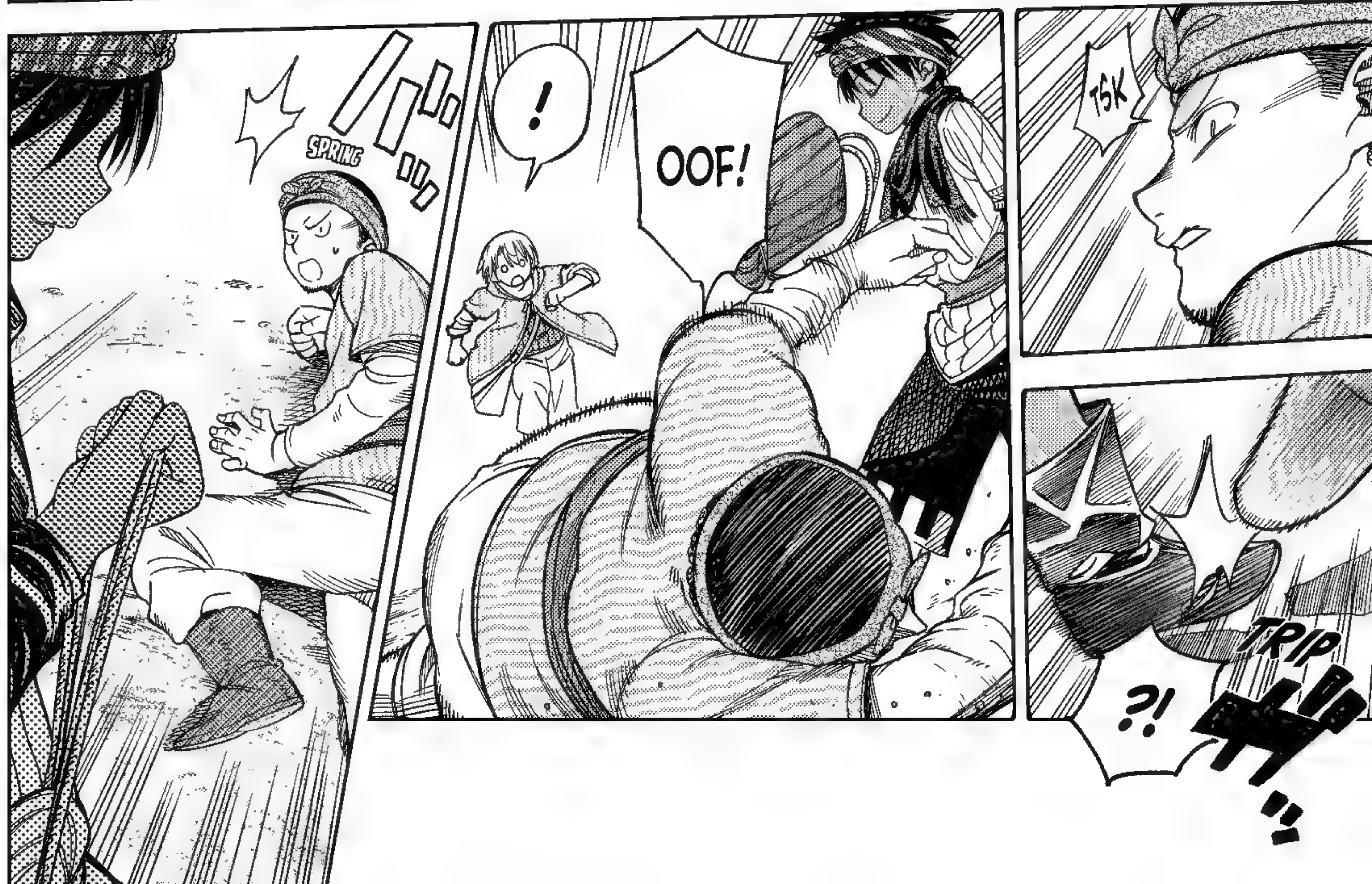
*The  
continent's  
insatiable  
demand for  
paper meant  
there was  
always a need  
for more  
laborers.*

SELL  
YOUR  
CLOTH!  
RAGS!  
OLD  
CLOTHES!

*Espleo  
was also a  
town of  
migrant  
workers.*

YOU  
GOT IT,  
WE'LL  
BUY IT!













I'VE GOT  
A NAME.  
IT'S ALV.

I MAY NOT  
LOOK IT,  
BUT I'M 13.  
SAME AS  
YOU TWO.

YOUNG RESIDENT OF ESPLEO  
ALV TLALOQUE

TAKING YOUR  
FIRST CRACK  
AT THE KAFNA  
EXAM, HUH?

YOU  
BASICALLY  
ADVERTISED  
IT BACK  
THERE IN  
THE  
LIBRARY.

HOW'D  
YOU  
KNOW  
OUR  
AGE  
?!

BOW!

THEO  
FUMIS!  
NICE TO  
MEET  
YOU!

No, um...  
Master Ganan  
just told me  
to keep my  
bag like this  
in town.

You  
knew  
about  
this?

AND DON'T  
CALL ME A  
LITTLE BOY.



HATES  
NOT  
BEING  
TAKEN  
SERI-  
OUSLY.

That's the  
complete  
opposite  
of how I  
think!

PEOPLE  
UNDER-  
ESTIMATE  
YOU.  
GIVES  
YOU THE  
UPPER  
HAND.

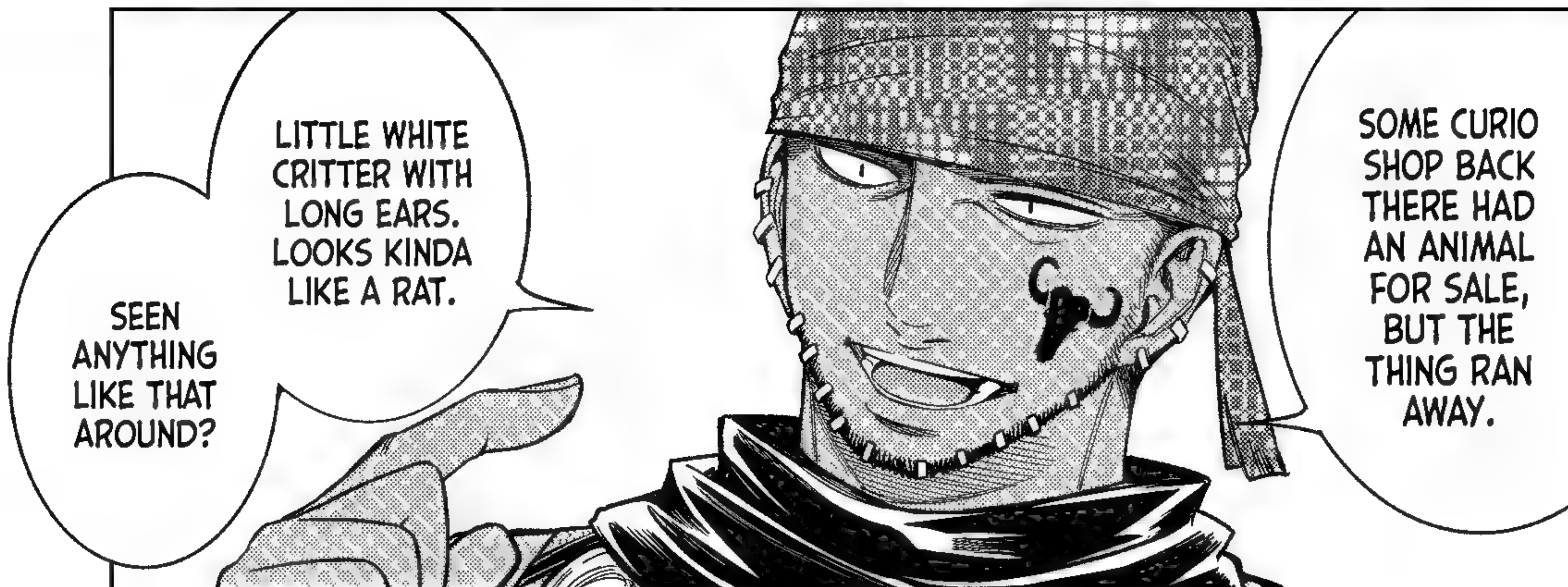
BEING  
LITTLE'S  
NOT SO  
BAD.

SORRY  
ABOUT  
EARLIER.  
YOU'RE SO  
SHORT,  
I WAS  
SURE YOU  
MUST BE  
YOUNGER  
THAN-

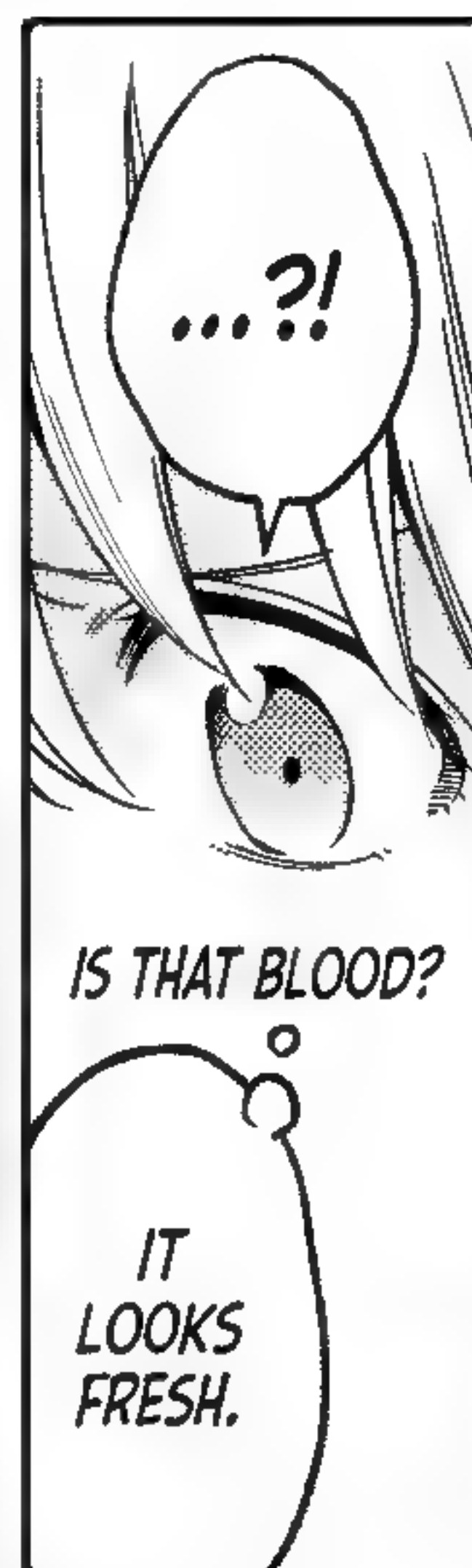
OOPS.  
SORRY...

I did it  
again!





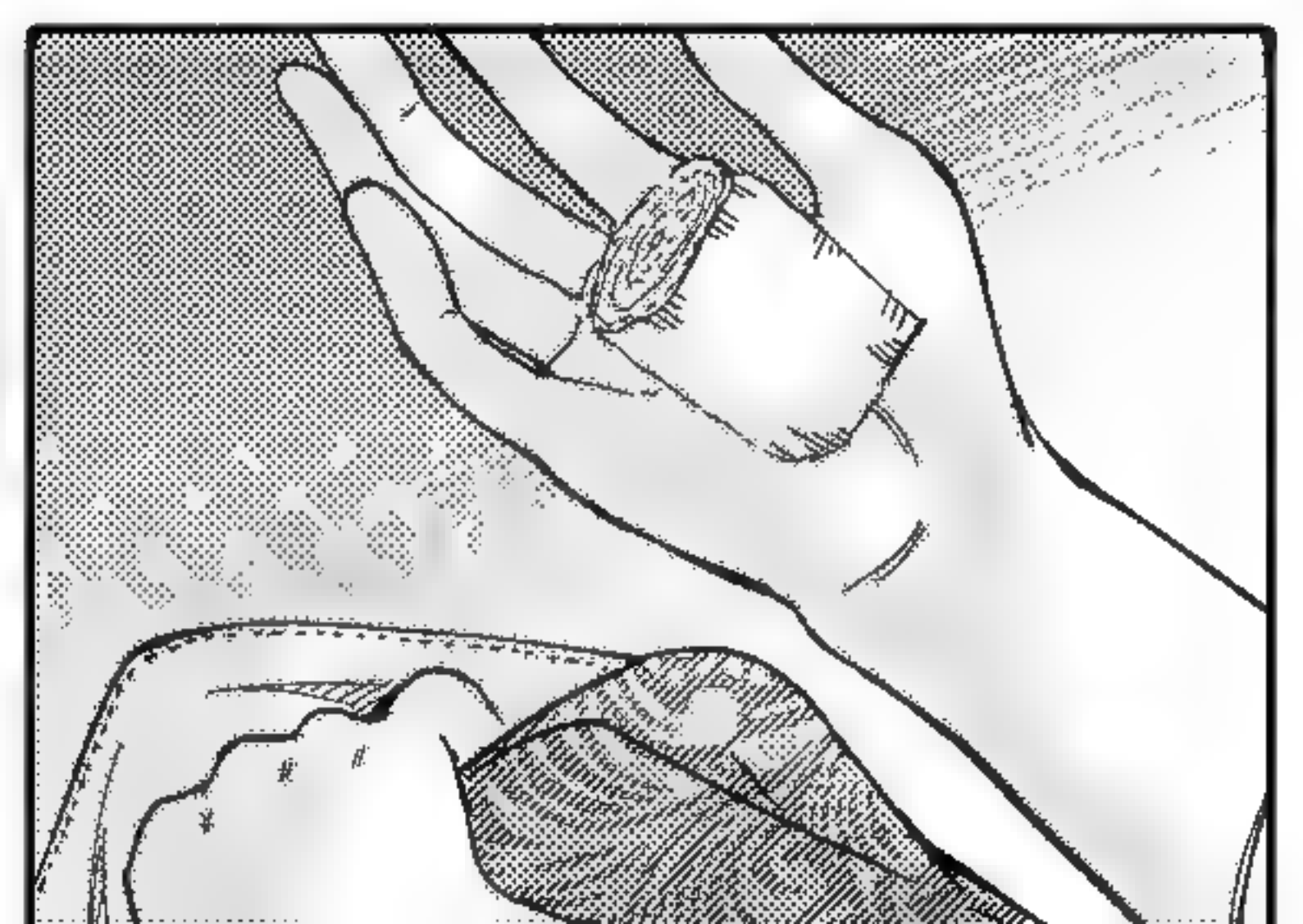
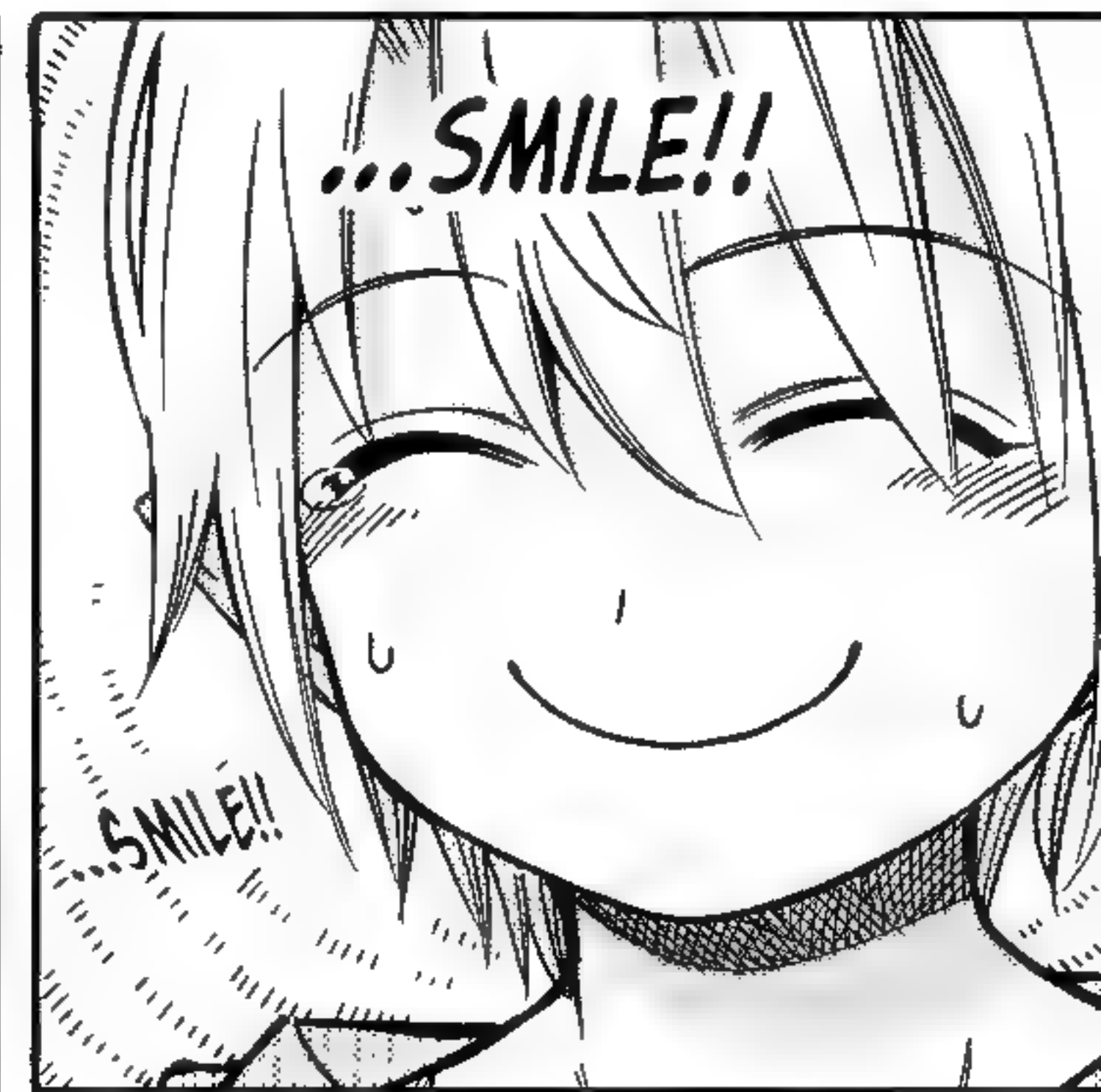
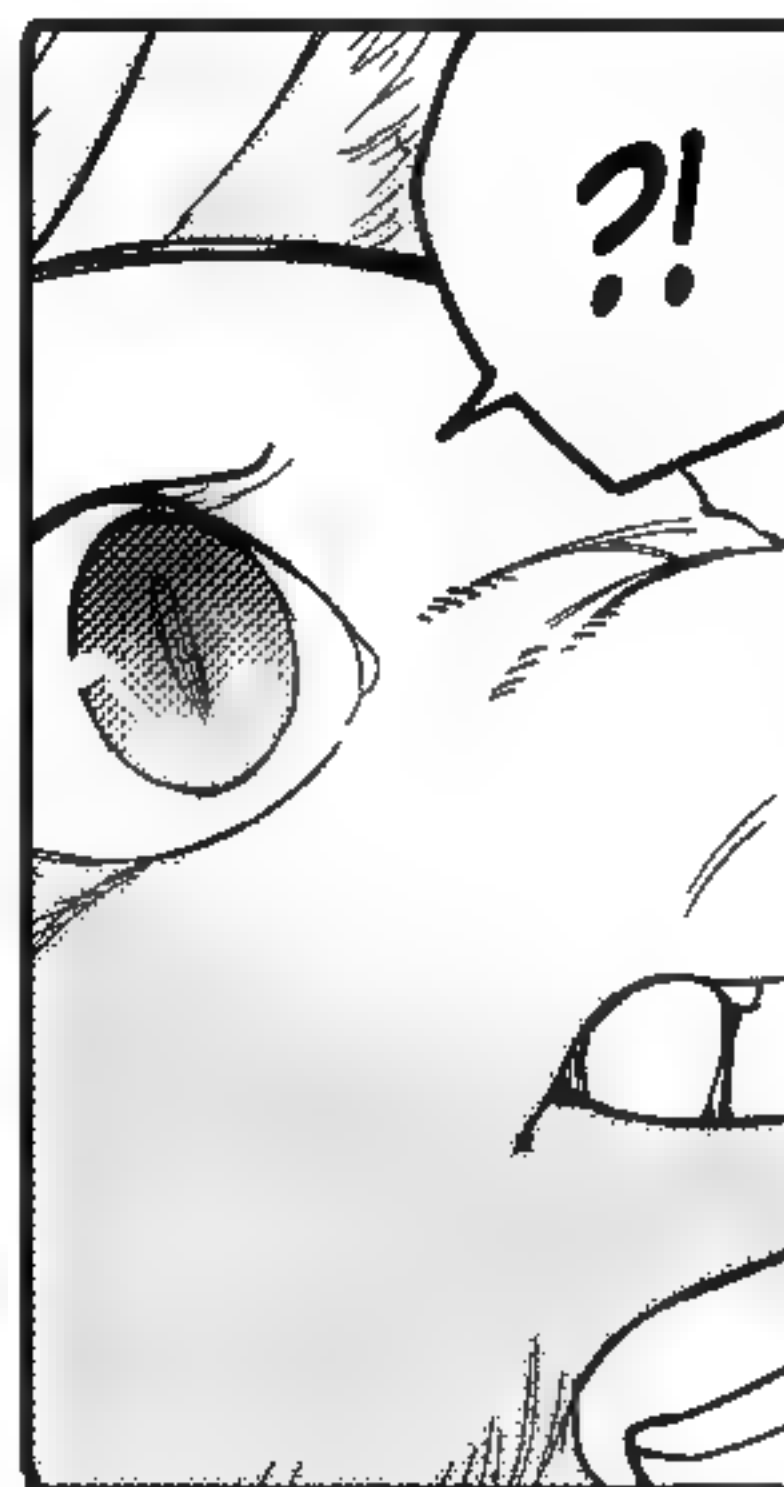
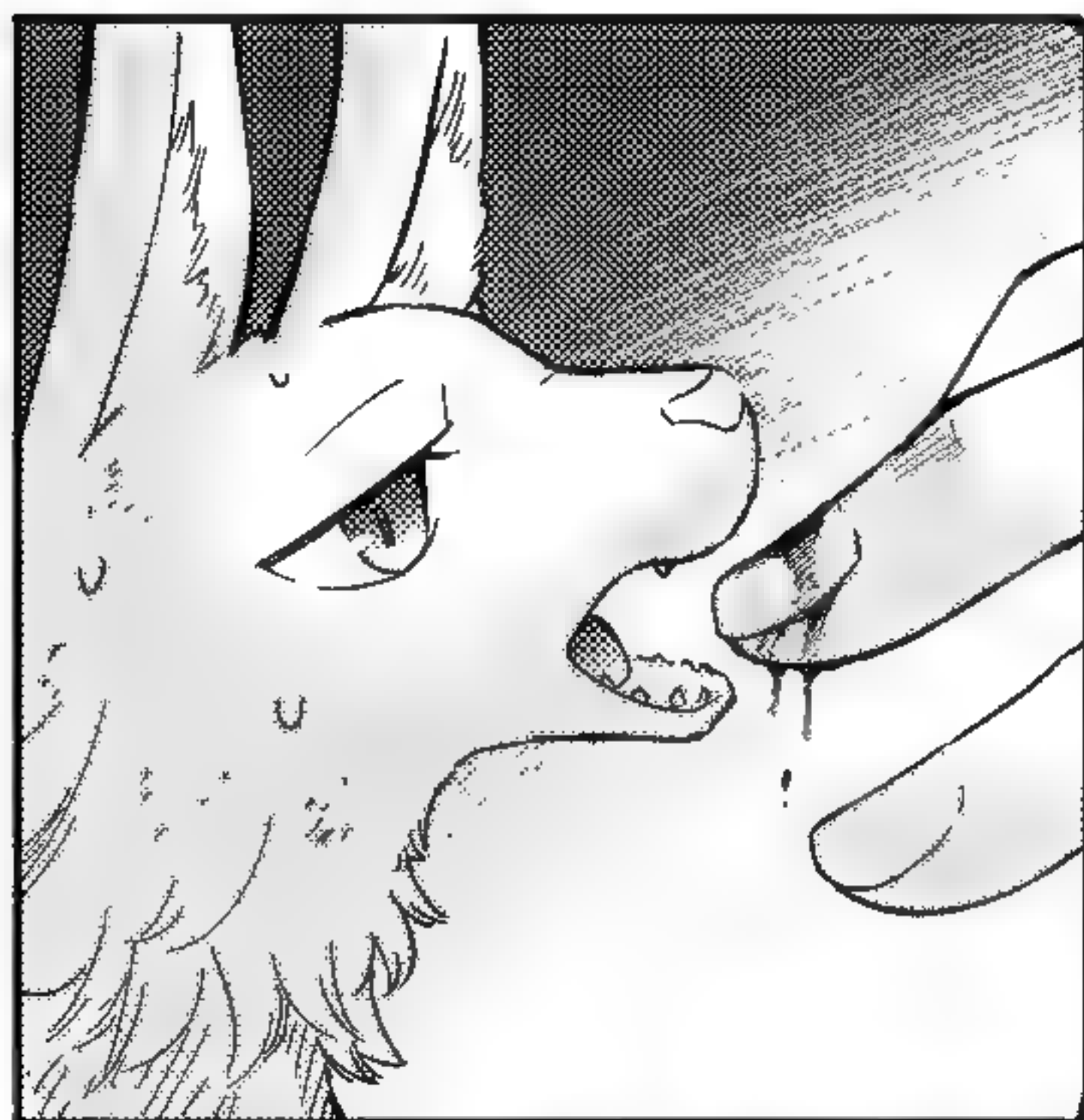
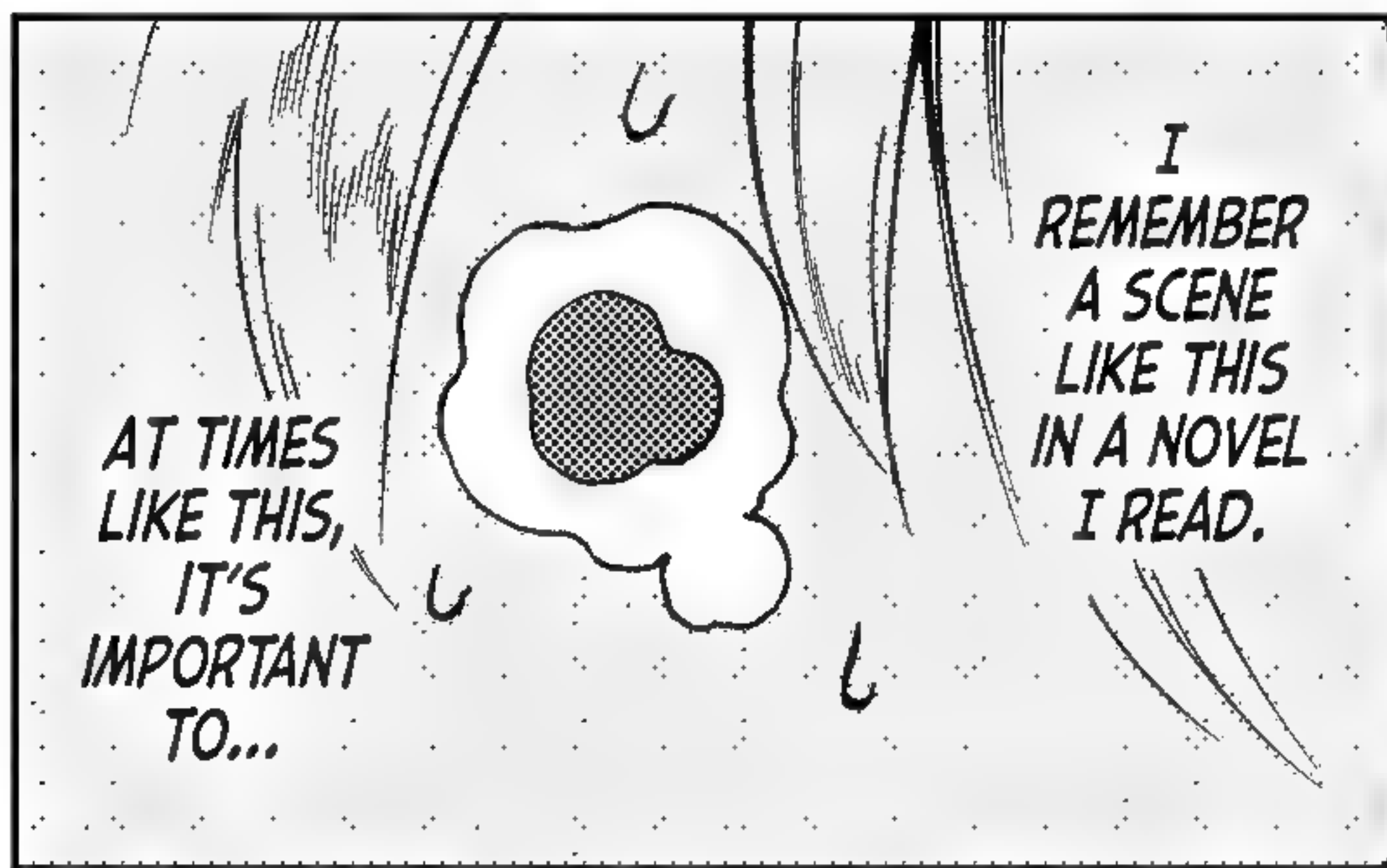




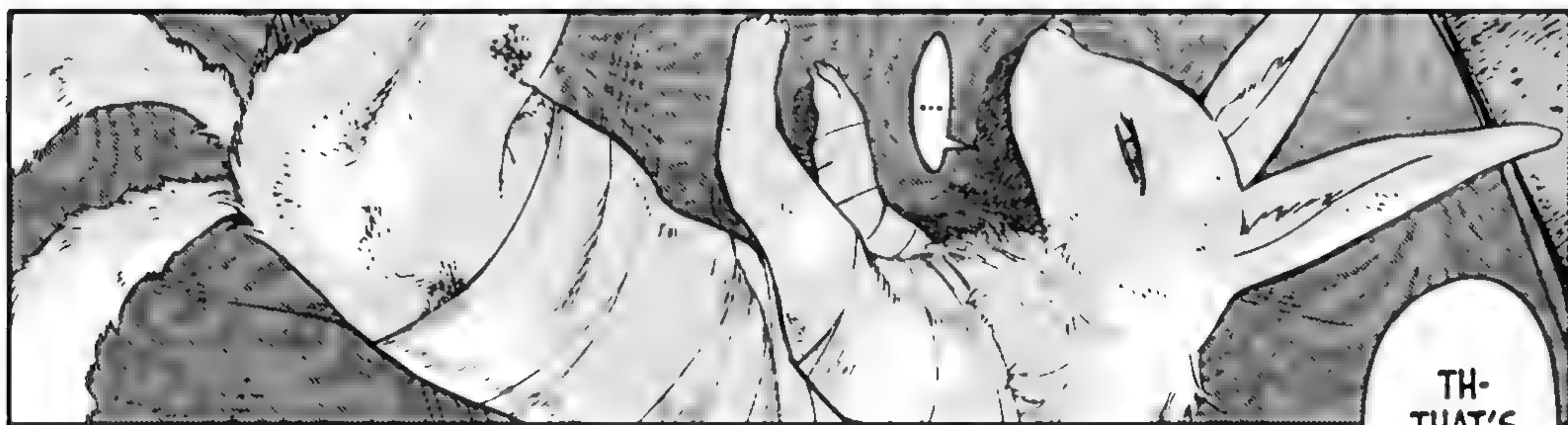
















INDIVIDUALS  
BORN WITHOUT  
ANY COLORING  
—COMPLETELY  
**WHITE!**

A  
CITLA—  
I'VE  
HEARD  
OF  
THOSE!



*Citlapol—  
the  
"Unpainted  
Wanderers."*

*These  
rarities  
were said  
to possess  
immense  
quantities  
of mana.*

*To some  
races,  
they were  
demons...*

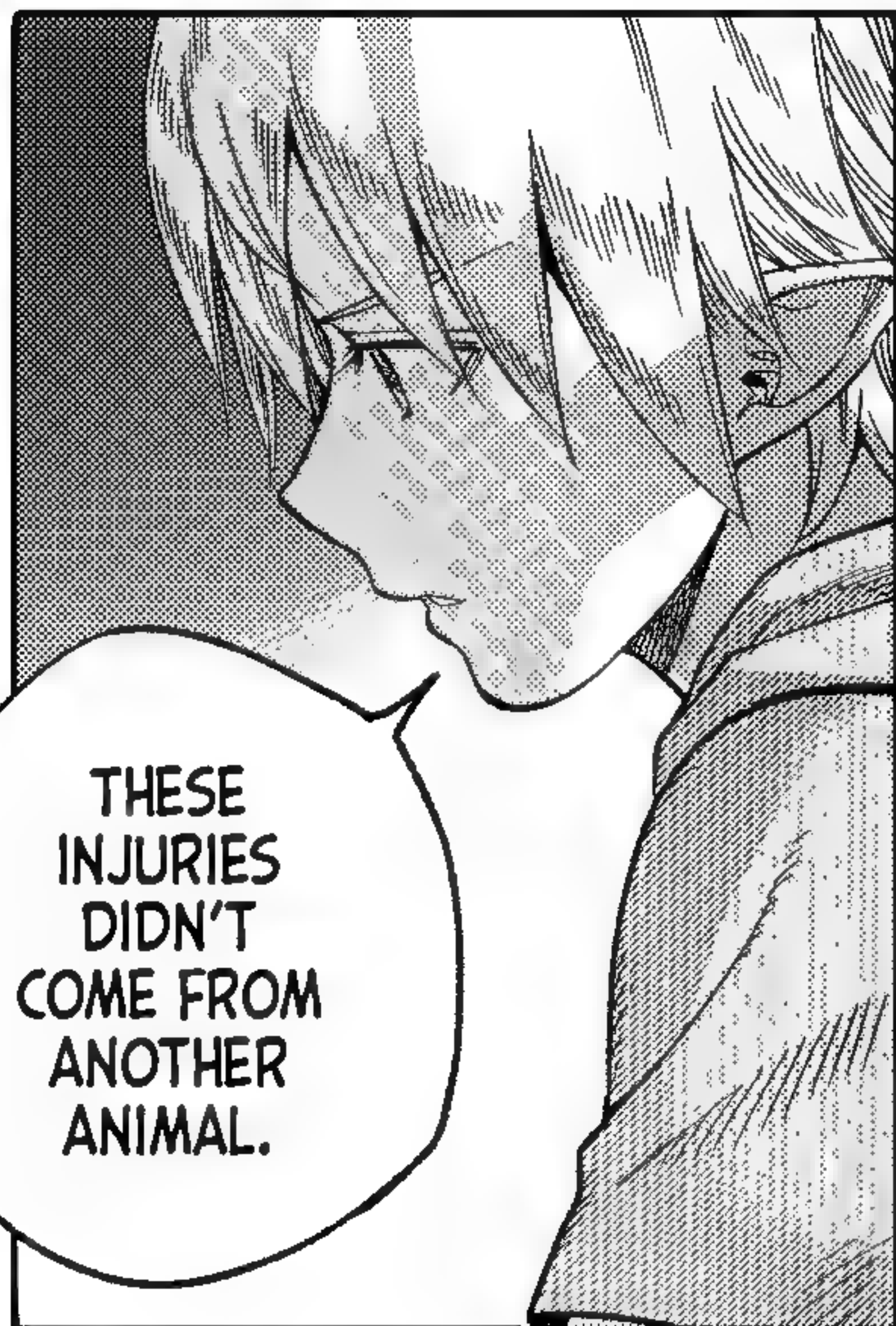
*...with  
disaster  
ever in  
their wake.  
To others,  
they were  
prized as  
sources of  
mystical  
medicine.*

ALL THE MORE  
REASON TO GET  
IT BACK TO ITS  
OWNER RIGHT  
AWAY.

THEY'RE  
RARE ENOUGH  
AS IT IS,  
SO TO FIND  
ONE THAT'S  
ALSO A  
CITLAPOL...

DUALTAILS  
ARE  
USUALLY  
BROWN.





THESE INJURIES DIDN'T COME FROM ANOTHER ANIMAL.



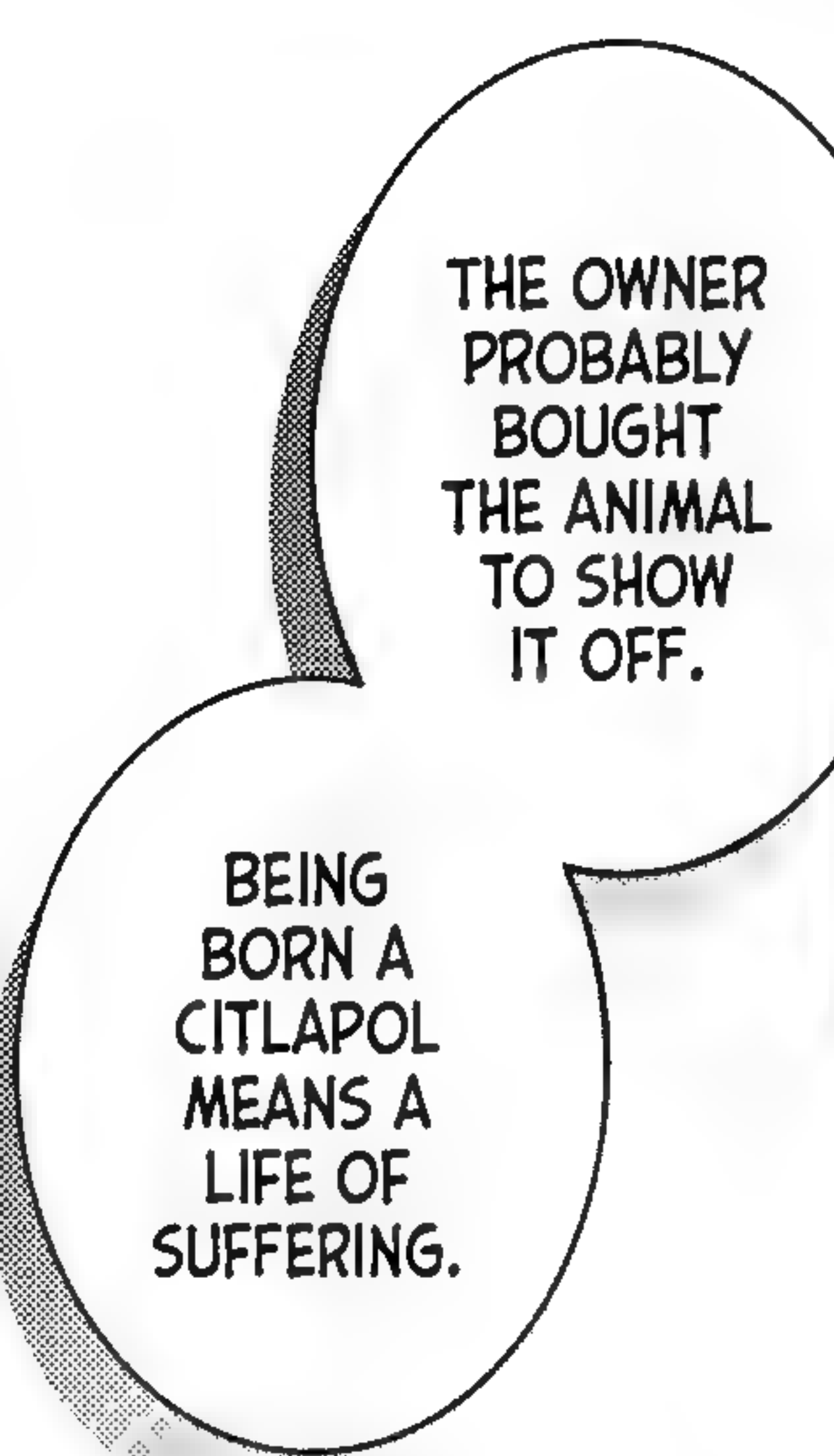
...WANDERED AROUND TOWN FOR DAYS. THE OWNER MUST BE WORRIED SICK.

LOOK. IT'S NOTHING BUT SKIN AND BONES. MUST HAVE...



HUH ?!

ARE YOU REALLY THAT OBLIVIOUS? LOOK CLOSER.



THE OWNER PROBABLY BOUGHT THE ANIMAL TO SHOW IT OFF.

BEING BORN A CITLAPOL MEANS A LIFE OF SUFFERING.



GIVEN THE STATE OF HER CLAWS, I'D SAY THE OWNER WAS THE ONE GRIPPING THE STOCK.

AND THESE ARE FRESH.

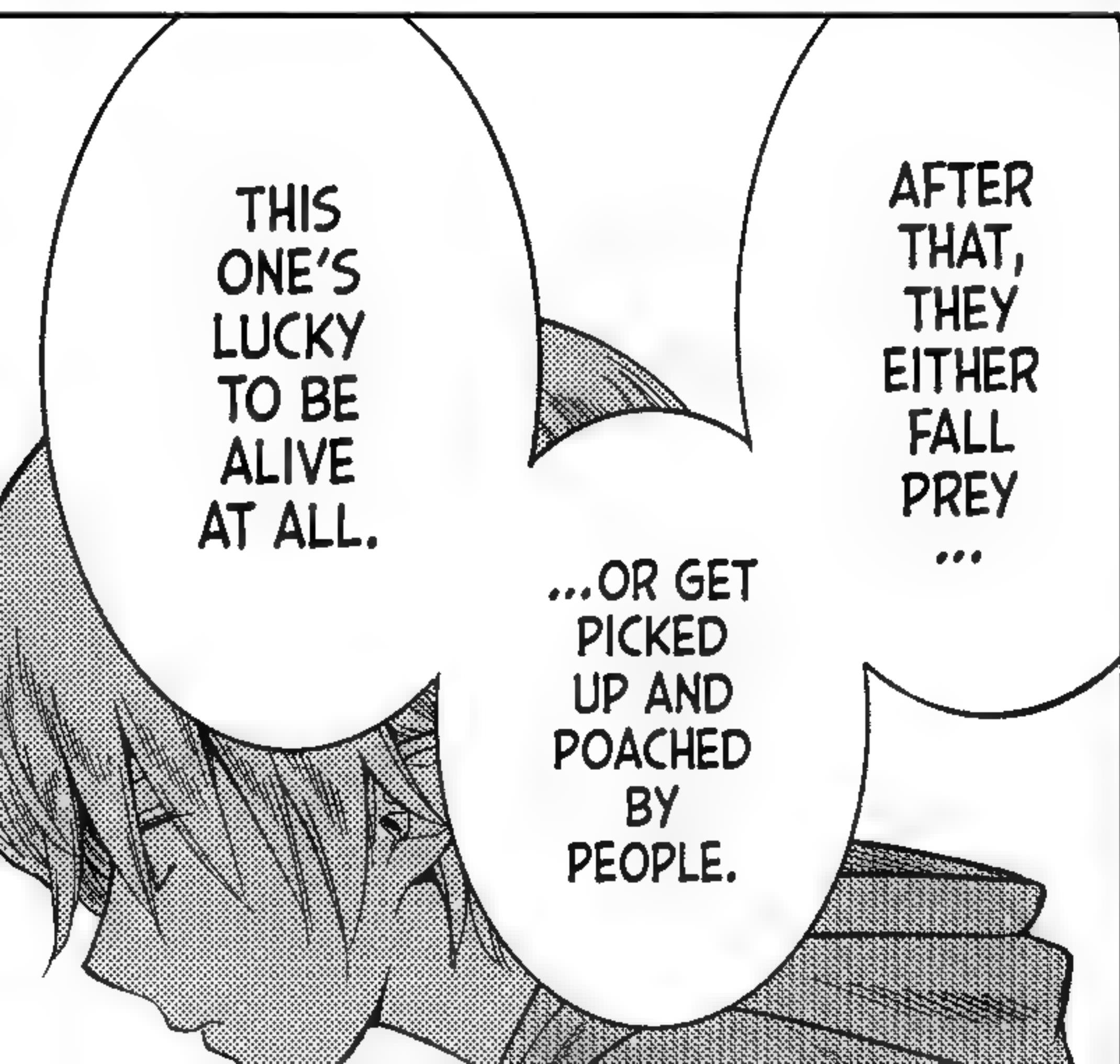
LACERATIONS LIKE THAT COME FROM A WHIP.

NO...! THEN, YOU THINK SHE WAS JUST AS SCRAWNY WHEN SHE RAN AWAY?



HER CLAWS ARE LONG AND CRACKED. I SEE TRACES OF RUST.

SHE'S PROBABLY BEEN KEPT IN A BARE IRON CAGE.



THIS ONE'S LUCKY TO BE ALIVE AT ALL.

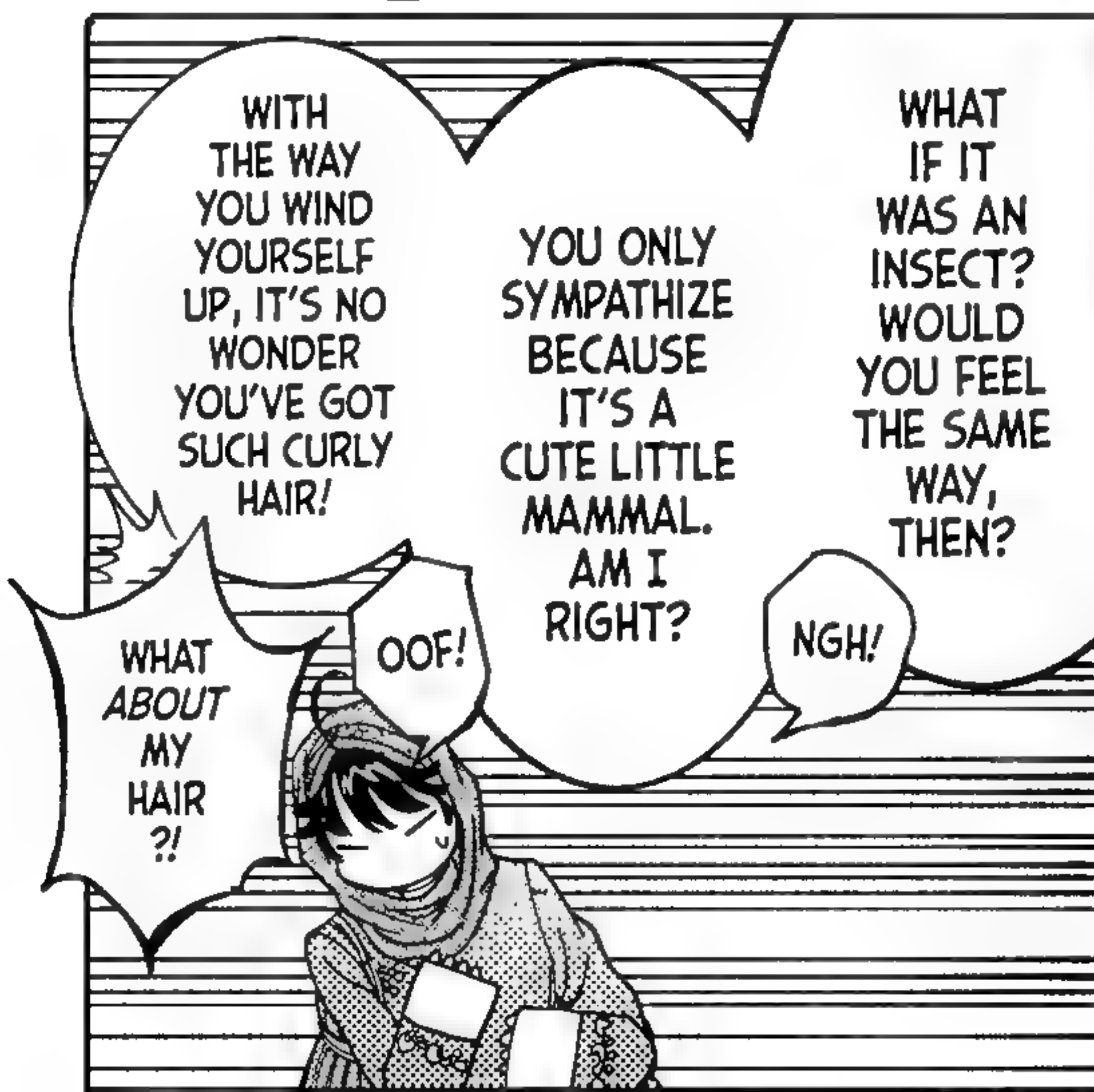
...OR GET PICKED UP AND POACHED BY PEOPLE.

AFTER THAT, THEY EITHER FALL PREY ...



IN THE WILD, THEY STICK OUT, SO THEY'RE ABANDONED BY THEIR PACKS SOON AFTER BIRTH.













WHAT?!  
WHY?!!

WE  
FOUND  
IT.



AIN'T  
GONNA  
SQUEEZE  
ANOTHER  
QUIPU  
OUT OF  
THAT OLD  
MAN.

WHAT,  
YOU  
WANT A  
REWARD  
?



NO.

AH.  
APPRE-  
CIATE  
IT, KID.  
NOW  
HAND IT  
OVER.

I'LL  
ACCOMPANY  
YOU TO THE  
SHOP.



SHE...



STRUGGLE  
モカ  
STRUGGLE  
モカ



IF WE  
HIDE IT,  
WE'RE NO  
BETTER  
THAN  
COMMON  
THIEVES.



WHAT-  
EVER.  
COME  
ON,  
THEN.

WHAT'RE  
YOU  
DOING  
?!

I THREW  
THEM OFF!  
THEY DIDN'T  
SUSPECT  
A THING!

SHOULDN'T  
WE KEEP  
THIS  
SECRET  
?!



I MEAN, I  
KNOW HE'S  
RIGHT, BUT...



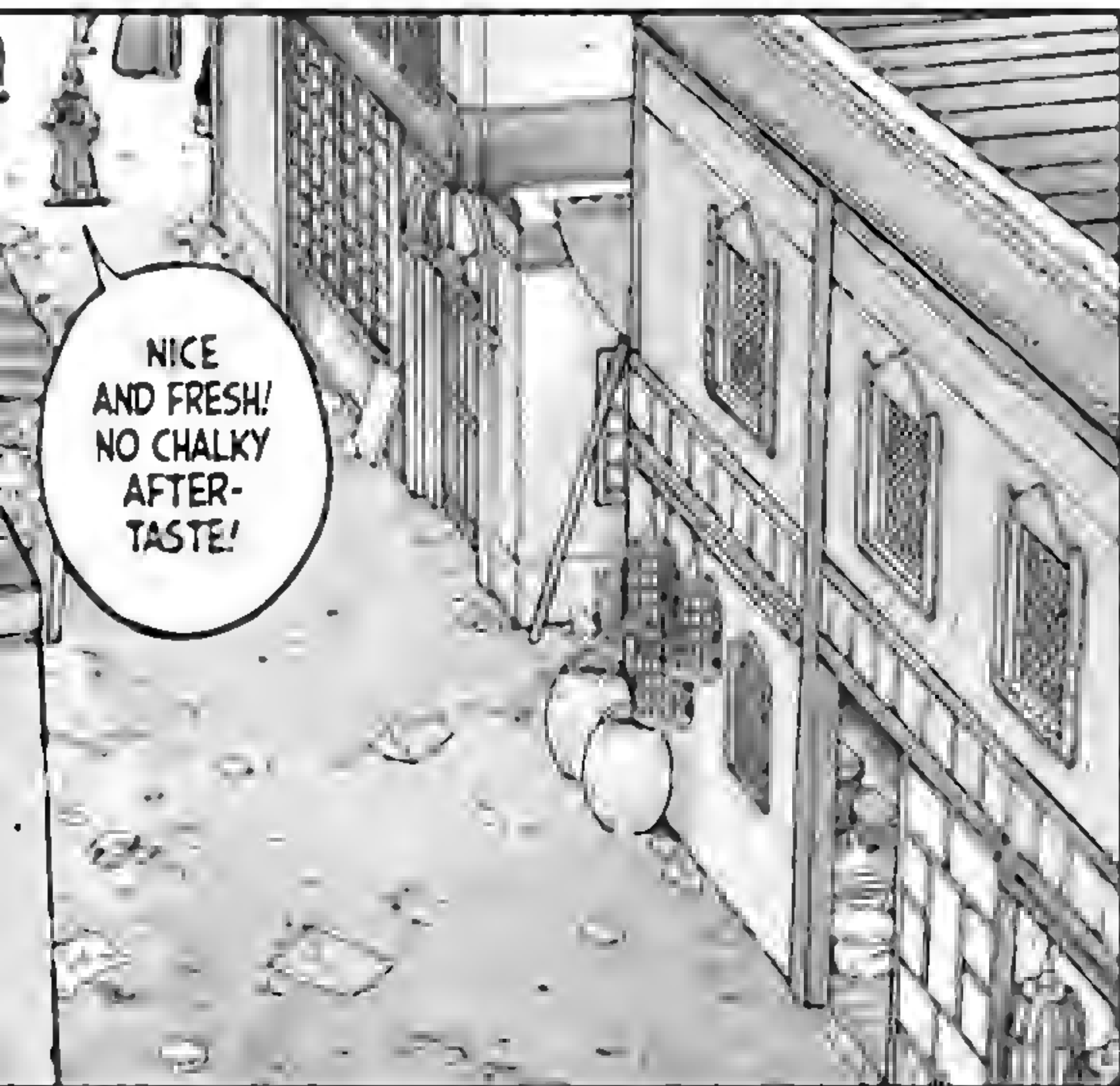
REALLY  
...?

HE'S  
GOT A  
POINT.



DON'T  
WORRY.  
IT'S  
GONNA  
BE ALL  
RIGHT.









LAZY PUNKS ...

HOW LONG DOES IT TAKE TO TRACK DOWN ONE LOUSY RODENT?

PROPRIETOR OF THE CURIO SHOP "PIGUERAO"

ETOHMAS



YOU DOUBT ME?!  
GET OUT OF MY SIGHT,  
BEFORE I CALL THE  
TOWN GUARD!

WHAT AN AWFUL MAN!



CREAK...

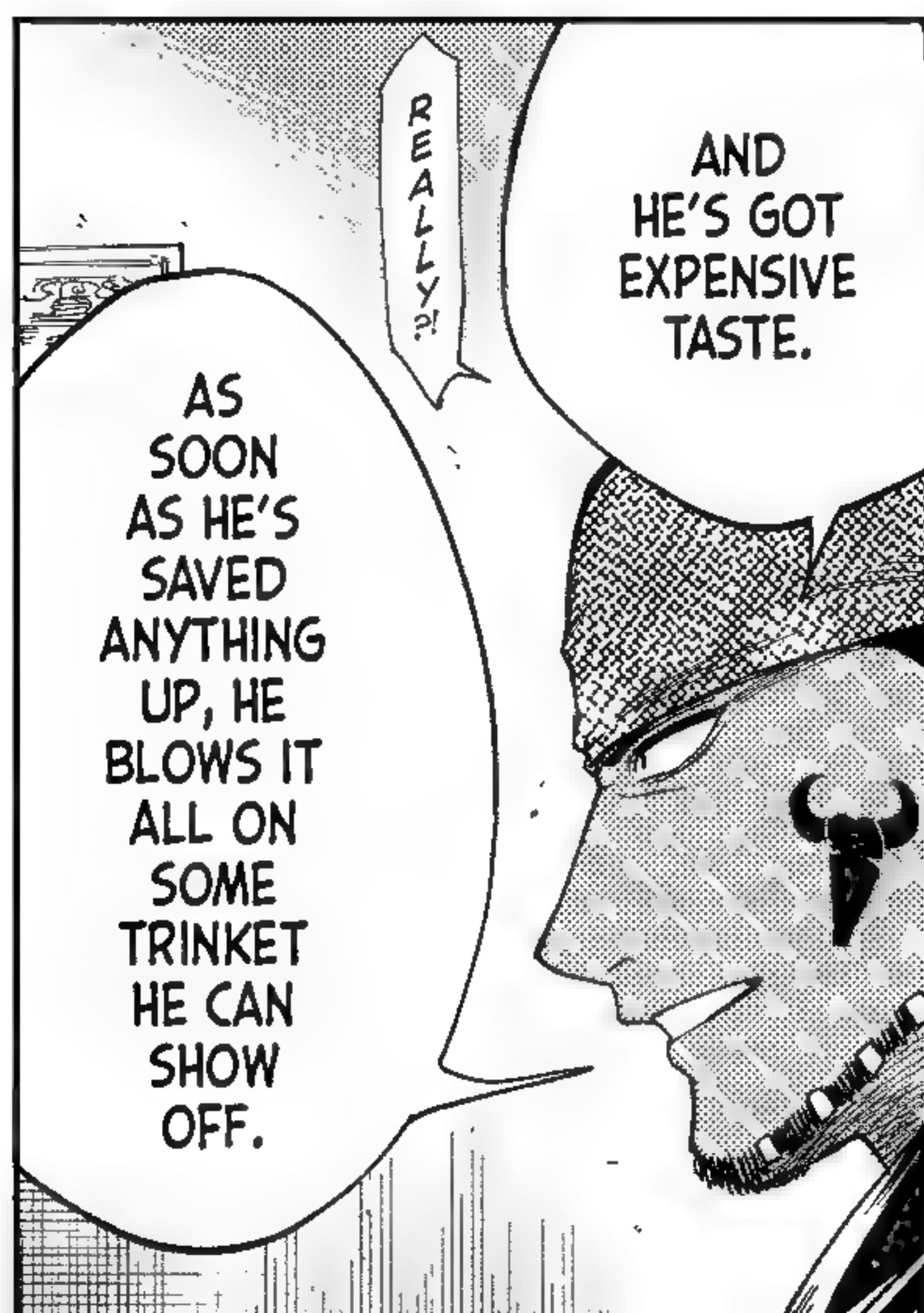
FWUMP



WHAT KIND OF PERSON IS HE?

...HE'S THE ONE WHO BOUGHT THE POOR LITTLE THING?

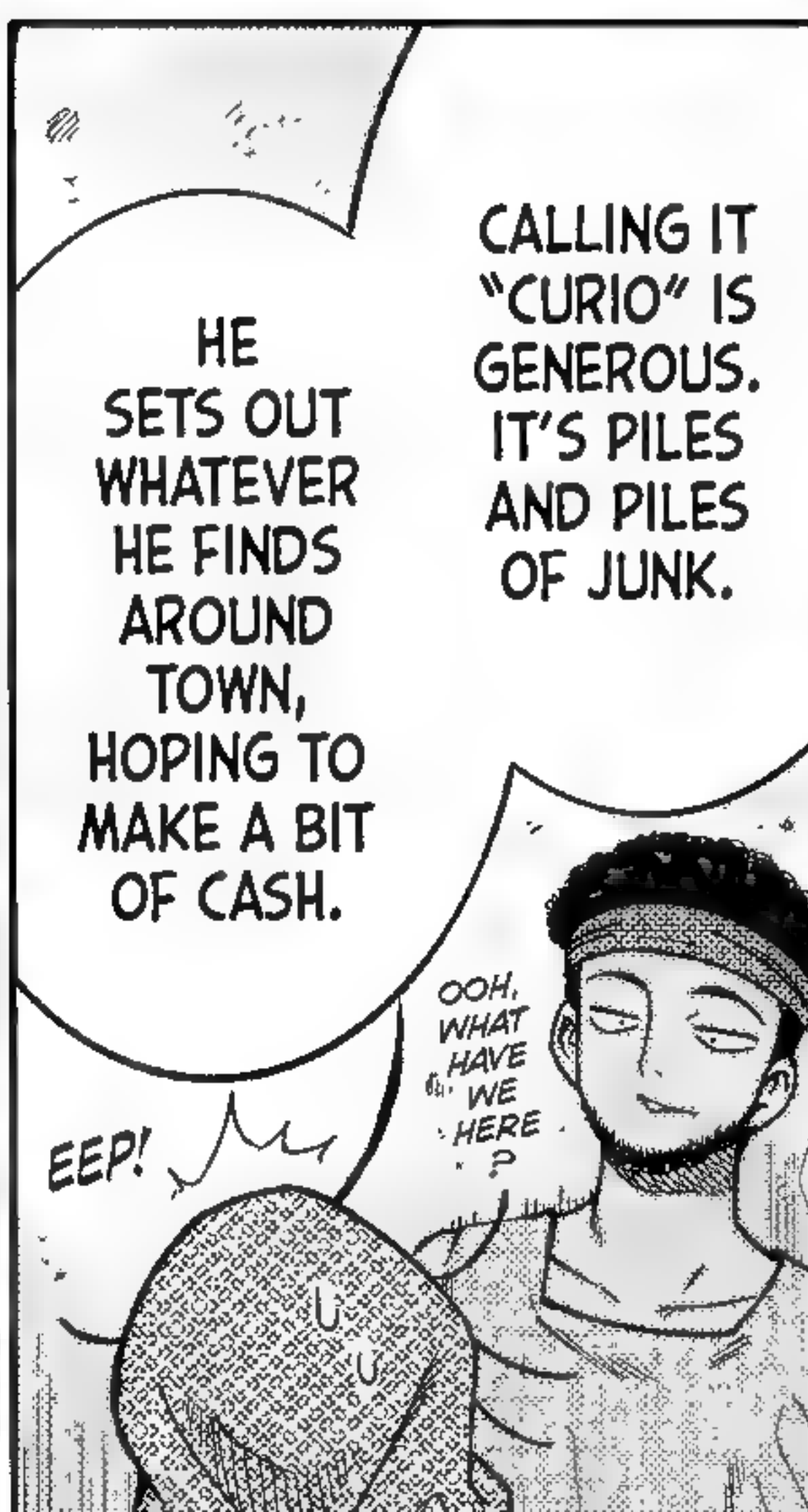
SO THIS ETOHMAS GUY THAT RUNS THE CURIO SHOP ...



AS SOON AS HE'S SAVED ANYTHING UP, HE BLOWS IT ALL ON SOME TRINKET HE CAN SHOW OFF.

REALLY?!

AND HE'S GOT EXPENSIVE TASTE.



HE SETS OUT WHATEVER HE FINDS AROUND TOWN, HOPING TO MAKE A BIT OF CASH.

CALLING IT "CURIO" IS GENEROUS. IT'S PILES AND PILES OF JUNK.

OOH, WHAT HAVE WE HERE?

EEP!



HE'S WELL-KNOWN IN CERTAIN PARTS OF TOWN.

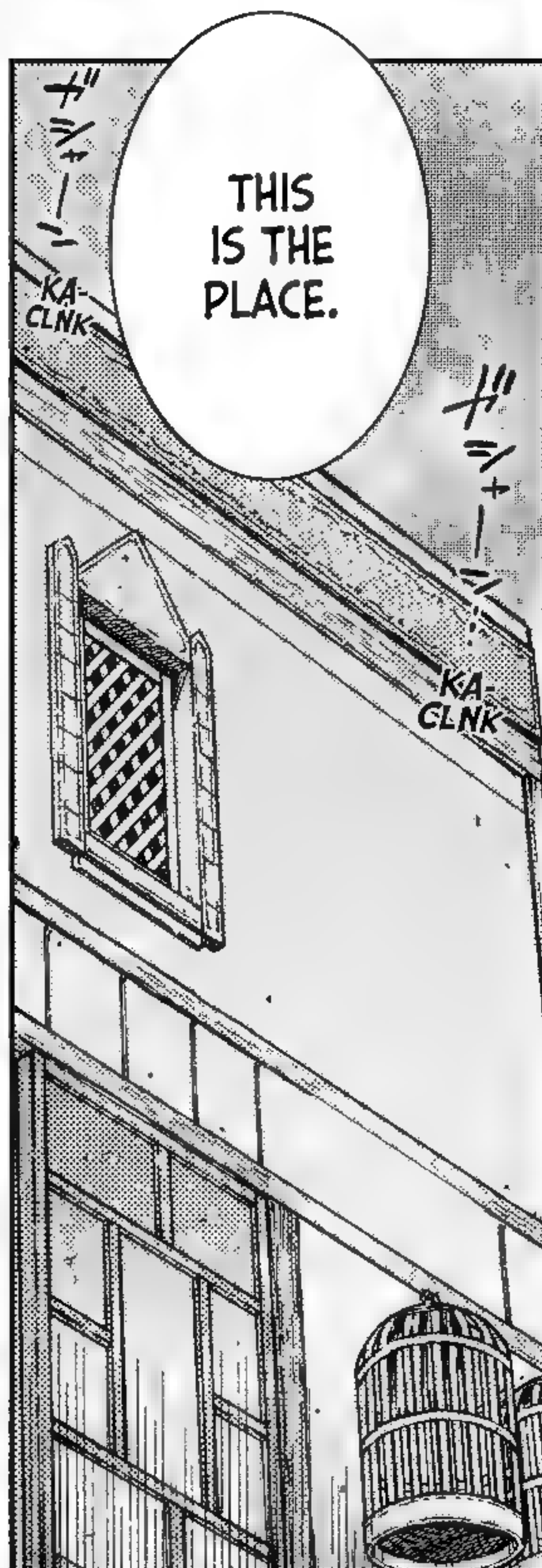
THINK OF HIM LIKE STINGINESS INCARNATE.

AH, SO YOU'VE HEARD OF HIM.





THESE  
BLASTED  
BITE  
MARKS  
STILL  
ACHE.



THIS  
IS THE  
PLACE.



WHAT A  
SHALLOW  
PERSON!

SO TO  
HIM, A  
CITLAPOL'S  
JUST A  
PRICEY  
SHOW-  
PIECE?



A CRITTER  
THAT CAN'T  
BOND WITH  
ITS MASTER?  
IT'S DEFEC-  
TIVE!

AND YOU  
BET I'M  
GETTING  
A FULL  
REFUND!

AS  
SOON AS  
I FIND IT,  
I'M TAKING  
THE THING  
BACK!



NGH  
!

SAYS THE GIRL  
WITH THE OUT  
OF-PLACE  
HEADSCARF.



OOH!



HAIR THAT  
SHINES LIKE  
GOLD!  
YOU'VE GOT  
GOOD LUCK  
WRITTEN ALL  
OVER YOU!

DID YOU  
COME TO THIS  
TOWN TO  
WORK? WHICH  
REGION ARE  
YOU FROM?



HEY, HEY.  
NO NEED  
TO MAKE  
A SCENE.

THE KID  
HERE  
FOUND  
YOUR RAT,  
OLD MAN.





TURNS OUT IT WAS A VICIOUS LITTLE CRITTER THAT REFUSES TO BE TAMED.

I HEARD SOME STRANGE WHITE RAT HAD BEEN BROUGHT IN FROM ANOTHER REGION AND JUST HAD TO OWN IT!

I JUST CAN'T GET MY FILL OF THE UNUSUAL, SEE?



DID YOU CAUSE THESE WOUNDS?

HM?

AH, YEAH. YOU PATCHED 'EM UP FOR ME, HUH? REAL NICE OF YOU.



...AND WHEN I WAS BEATING SOME SENSE INTO THE THING, IT UP AND RAN AWAY!

ENDED UP WITH A BLOODY HAND...



FWIP



FWIP

ALL RIGHT, THEN. HAND IT OVER.



WHAT'S THE BIG IDEA?!

YOU AFTER A REWARD? FORGET IT!



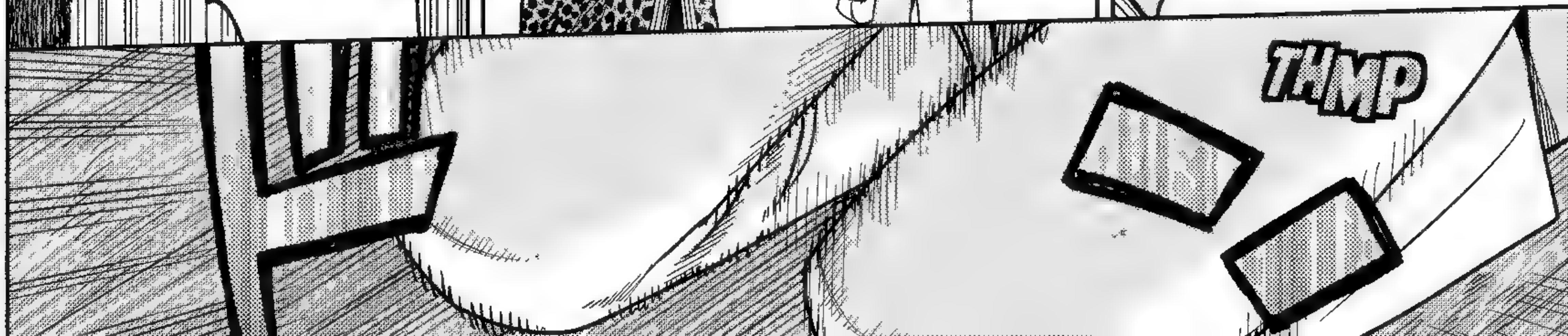
FWIP

FWIP

FWIP



?



THMP





LET  
ME  
TAKE  
HER  
WITH  
ME!

PLEASE,  
SIR!



OH  
?

HMPH.

WHAT  
?

HUH  
?!



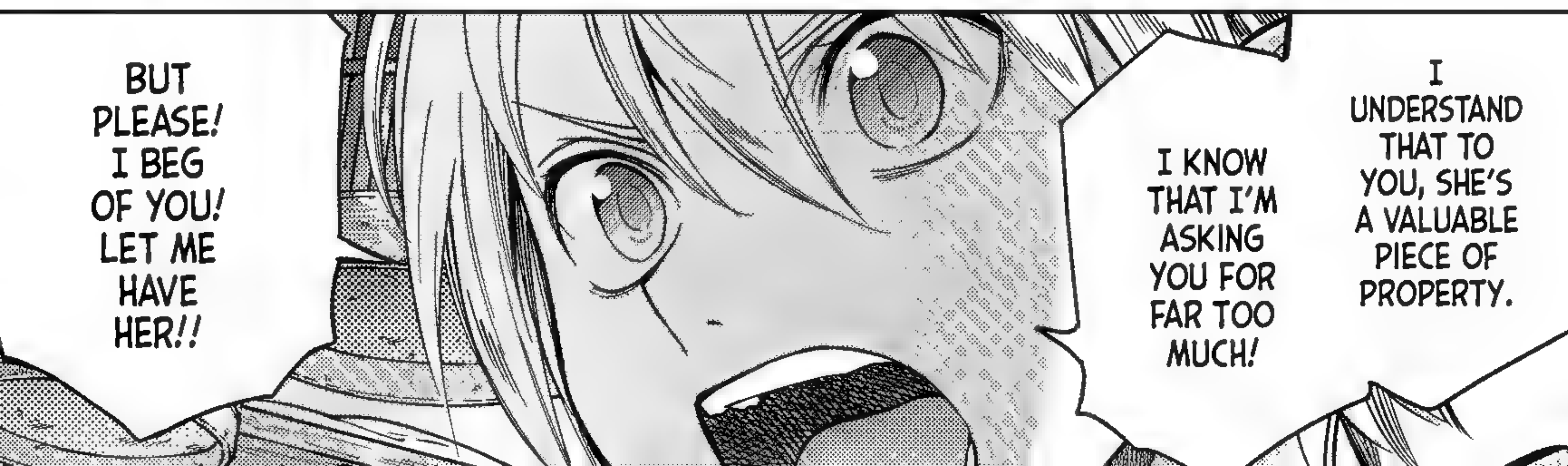
DIDN'T  
THINK  
SO!

NO! I  
DON'T!



HALF A  
MILLION  
QUIPU!  
DO YOU  
HAVE THAT  
KIND OF  
MONEY?!

ARE YOU  
MAD? DO  
YOU KNOW  
HOW MUCH  
THAT THING  
COST?!



BUT  
PLEASE!  
I BEG  
OF YOU!  
LET ME  
HAVE  
HER!!

I KNOW  
THAT I'M  
ASKING  
YOU FOR  
FAR TOO  
MUCH!

I  
UNDERSTAND  
THAT TO  
YOU, SHE'S  
A VALUABLE  
PIECE OF  
PROPERTY.

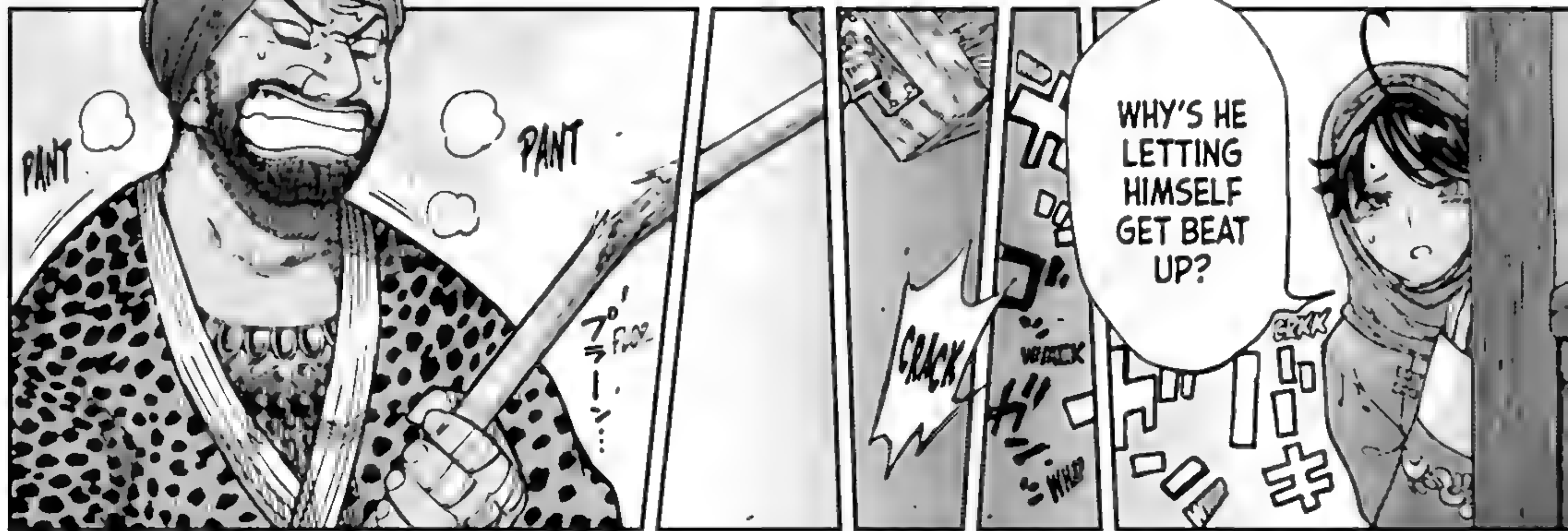




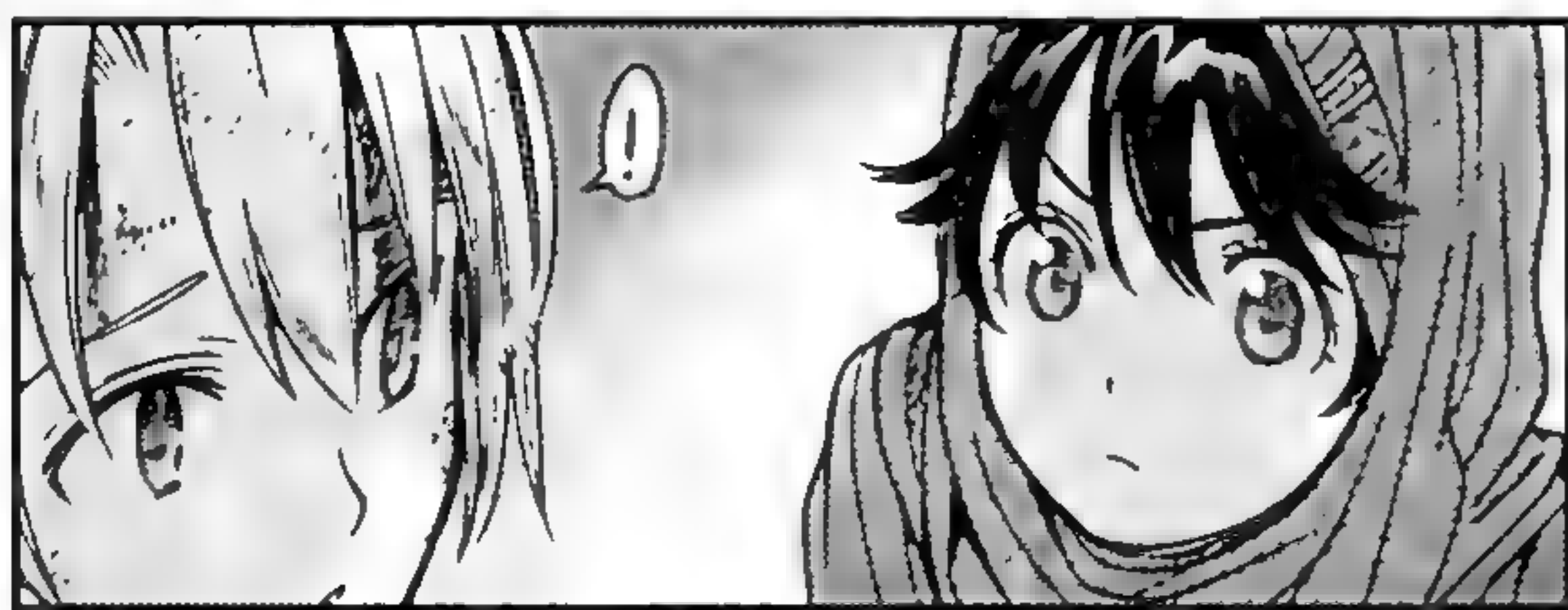
















NO! I  
COULD  
NEVER  
DO  
SOME-  
THING  
THAT  
MEAN.



WHY  
ARE YOU  
LETTING  
HIM DO  
THIS TO  
YOU?!

I'VE  
SEEN HOW  
STRONG  
YOU ARE.  
WHY NOT  
SEND HIM  
FLYING  
ACROSS  
TOWN?!



IT'S  
PERFECTLY  
REASONABLE  
FOR HIM TO  
WANT TO  
ROUGH ME  
UP A BIT.

IN HIS EYES,  
I'M A CHILD  
THROWING  
A TANTRUM  
ABOUT AN  
ITEM I CAN'T  
AFFORD.



AND  
IT'S NOT  
EXACTLY MY  
PLACE TO  
CRITICIZE THE  
OWNER FOR  
THE WAY HE  
TREATS THE  
THINGS HE  
OWNS.

TO THE  
STORE, THIS  
LITTLE ONE  
REPRESENTS  
A LOT OF  
MONEY.



IN FACT,  
I'M SURE  
HE'S A  
GOOD  
PERSON  
AT  
HEART!

HE  
HASN'T  
DONE  
ANYTHING  
WRONG.

THE WHOLE  
SITUATION'S  
MY FAULT.





...I THINK HE'D  
BE WILLING TO  
HAND ONE OF  
HIS BELONGINGS  
OVER TO GET RID  
OF A BOTHER-  
SOME CHILD.

SO IF  
I KEEP  
BEGGING  
WITH  
ALL MY  
HEART...



GUESS  
I'VE  
GOT NO  
CHOICE.

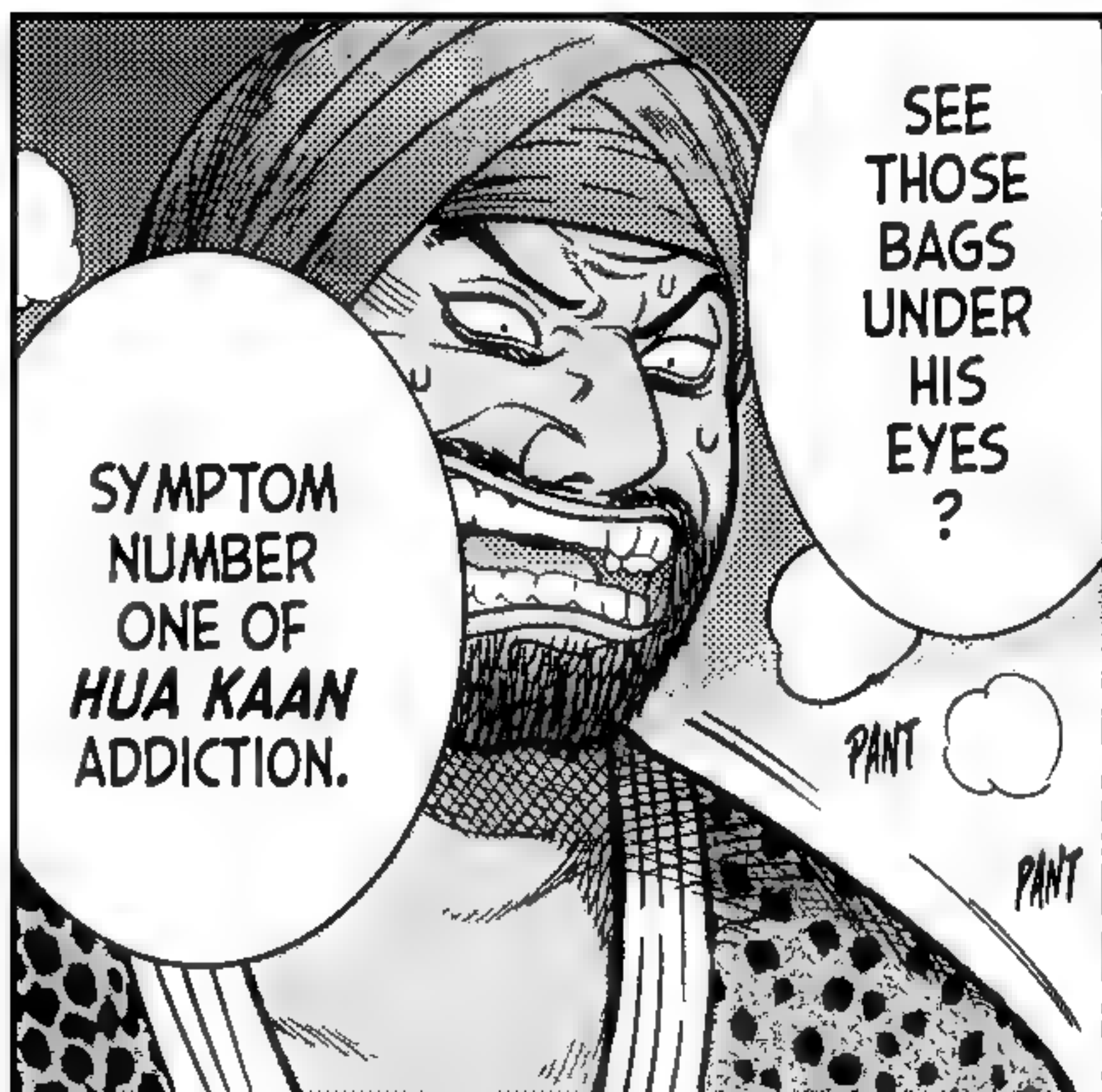
HMPH.



THERE  
GOES  
ANY  
TRACE  
OF  
LOGIC.

OH,  
BOY...










SO WE'LL  
TELL THE  
GUARDS  
ABOUT HIS  
LITTLE  
HABIT!

A SHOP  
LIKE THIS IS  
PROBABLY  
SELLING  
HUA KAN  
UNDER THE  
TABLE.

USING THE  
DRUG ISN'T  
ILLEGAL, BUT  
DEALING IN IT  
IS PROHIBITED  
THROUGHOUT  
THE REGION.

LET'S JUST BE  
THANKFUL THE  
GUARD ISN'T  
INVOLVED.

AND WHETHER OR  
NOT HE'S DEALING,  
IT WON'T CHANGE  
THE FACT THAT YOUR  
FRIEND'S IN THERE  
CAUSING TROUBLE.  
THEY'LL BOTH GET  
ARRESTED.



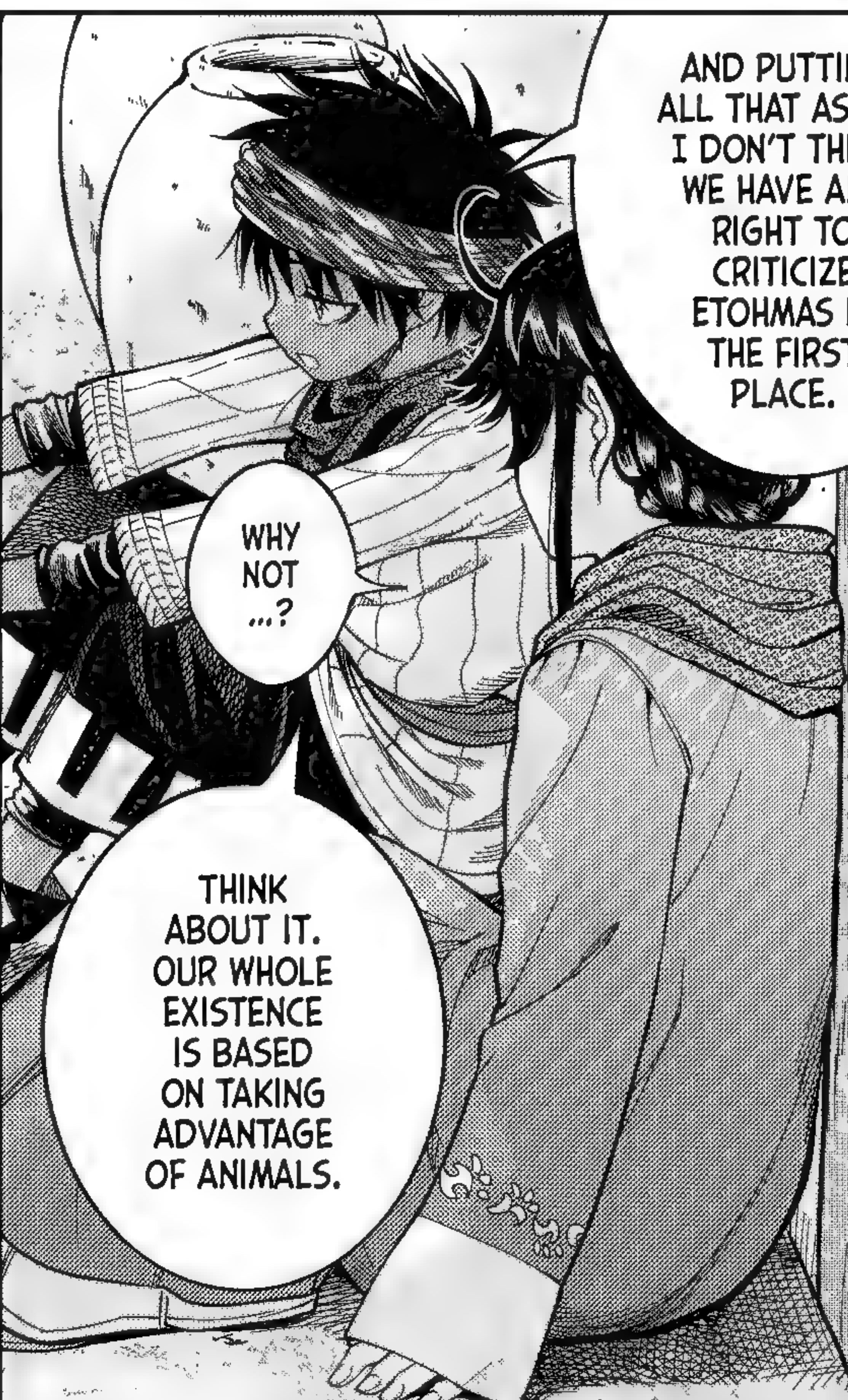
NAH.  
WHEN PUSH  
COMES TO  
SHOVE, DRUG  
CHARGES ARE  
PRETTY EASY  
TO BRIBE  
YOUR WAY  
OUT OF.



AND YOU  
PROBABLY  
ENJOY  
A BIT OF  
MEAT WHEN  
YOU'RE  
HUNGRY.

I'D  
BET GOOD  
MONEY YOU  
RODE INTO  
TOWN ON A  
HORSE OR  
A CAMEL.


SO, WHAT,  
SOMEONE  
WHO *EATS*  
ANIMALS IS  
GONNA GET  
ON THE CASE  
OF SOMEONE  
WHO SMACKS  
'EM AROUND  
A BIT?



AND PUTTING  
ALL THAT ASIDE,  
I DON'T THINK  
WE HAVE ANY  
RIGHT TO  
CRITICIZE  
ETOHMAS IN  
THE FIRST  
PLACE.

WHY  
NOT  
...?

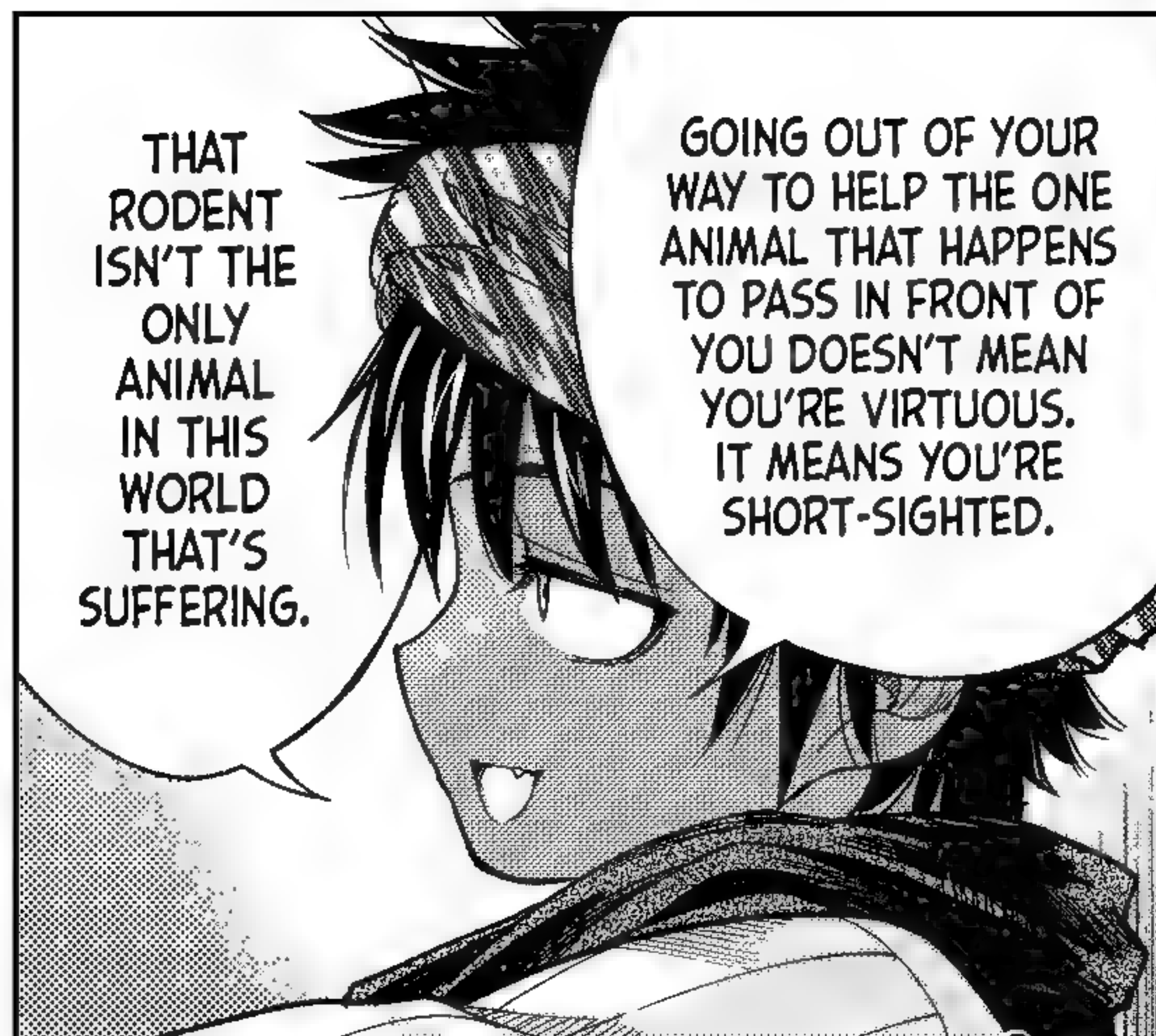
THINK  
ABOUT IT.  
OUR WHOLE  
EXISTENCE  
IS BASED  
ON TAKING  
ADVANTAGE  
OF ANIMALS.



AND WHO  
DECIDES  
WHICH  
ANIMALS  
ARE  
LIVESTOCK?  
PEOPLE.

THAT  
POOR  
LITTLE  
THING  
ISN'T  
LIVE-  
STOCK!





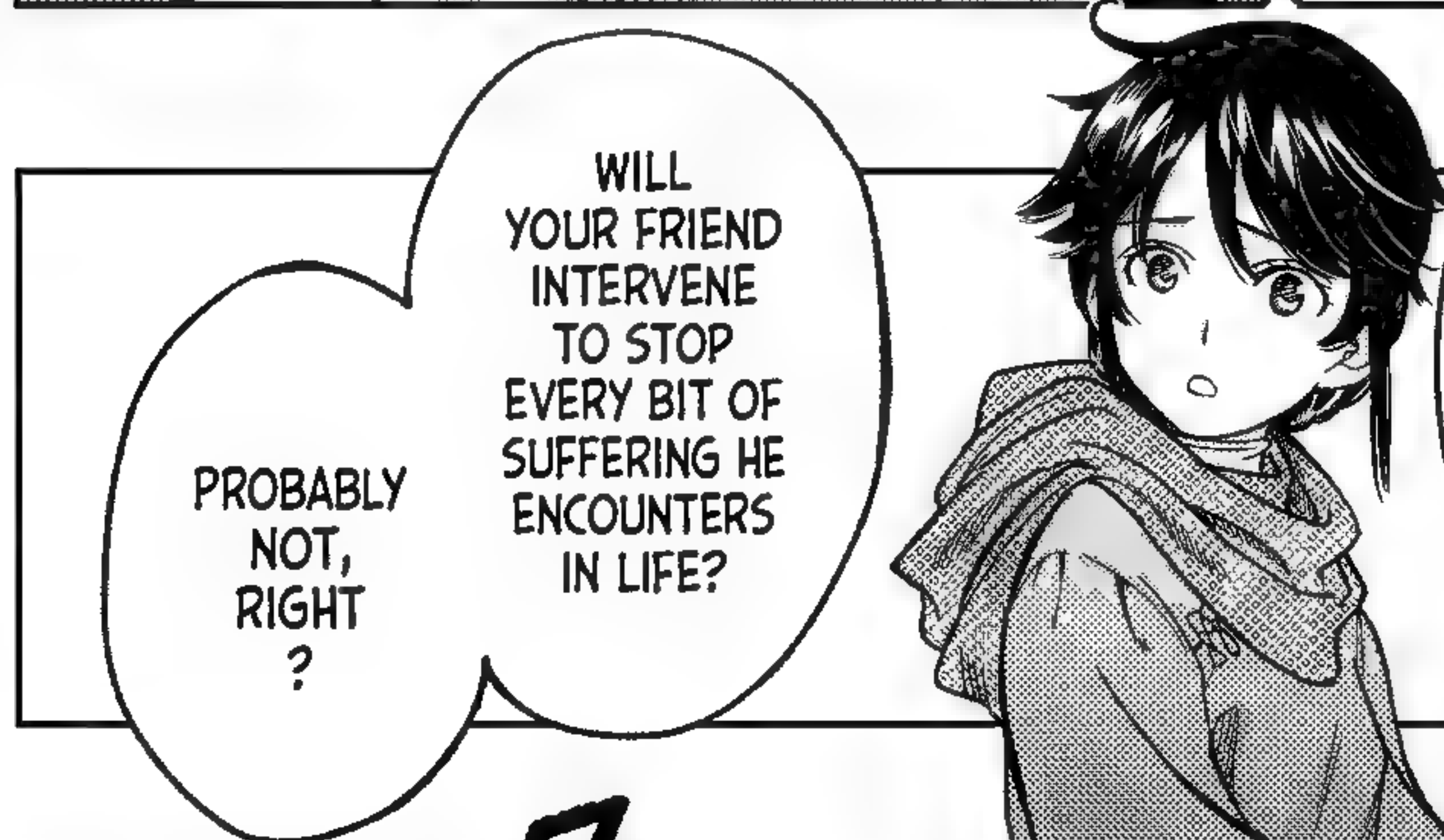
THAT  
RODENT  
ISN'T THE  
ONLY  
ANIMAL  
IN THIS  
WORLD  
THAT'S  
SUFFERING.

GOING OUT OF YOUR  
WAY TO HELP THE ONE  
ANIMAL THAT HAPPENS  
TO PASS IN FRONT OF  
YOU DOESN'T MEAN  
YOU'RE VIRTUOUS.  
IT MEANS YOU'RE  
SHORT-SIGHTED.



THAT'S  
PROBABLY  
WHY HE'S IN  
THERE TAKING  
THE HITS  
WITHOUT ANY  
COMPLAINT.

YOUR  
FRIEND  
SEEMS TO  
GRASP THAT  
INCONGRU-  
ENCE, AT  
LEAST.



PROBABLY  
NOT,  
RIGHT  
?

WILL  
YOUR FRIEND  
INTERVENE  
TO STOP  
EVERY BIT OF  
SUFFERING HE  
ENCOUNTERS  
IN LIFE?

EVEN THE  
VEGETABLES  
WE ENJOY ARE  
THANKS TO SOME  
OX OUT THERE  
IN A YOKE,  
GETTING LASHED  
WITH A WHIP.

DOES HE  
REFUSE TO  
RIDE ATOP  
HORSES  
AND  
CAMELS?

DOESN'T  
BLONDIE  
EVER EAT  
MUTTON  
OR  
FOWL?



IF  
YOU  
ASK  
ME  
...







...WERE WE  
SUPPOSED  
TO ACCEPT  
THAT LIFE FOR  
A CITLAPOL  
WILL ALWAYS  
BE BAD?

WHEN  
WE FOUND  
THAT POOR  
THING AND  
REALIZED  
WHAT IT  
WAS...



...JUST  
BECAUSE  
WE CAN'T  
SAVE EVERY  
ANIMAL  
...

...DOESN'T  
MEAN IT'S  
A WASTE  
OF TIME TO  
TRY AND  
SAVE ONE.



...EVEN  
THOUGH  
IT MIGHT  
CONTRADICT  
OTHER  
ACTIONS  
HE TAKES  
IN LIFE?

WAS IT  
WRONG OF  
THEO TO  
TRY AND  
HELP...



I'D  
SAY THE  
OLD GUY'S  
ANGER HAS  
ABOUT RUN  
ITS COURSE,  
WOULDN'T  
YOU?

ALL  
RIGHT,  
THEN.

...



BEATS  
ME.

I'M JUST  
THROWING  
A LITTLE  
LOGIC OUT  
THERE.



...IT'D  
BUG ME  
KNOWING  
THERE'S A  
TREASURE  
...

...BURIED  
AMONG  
THOSE  
PILES OF  
TRASH.

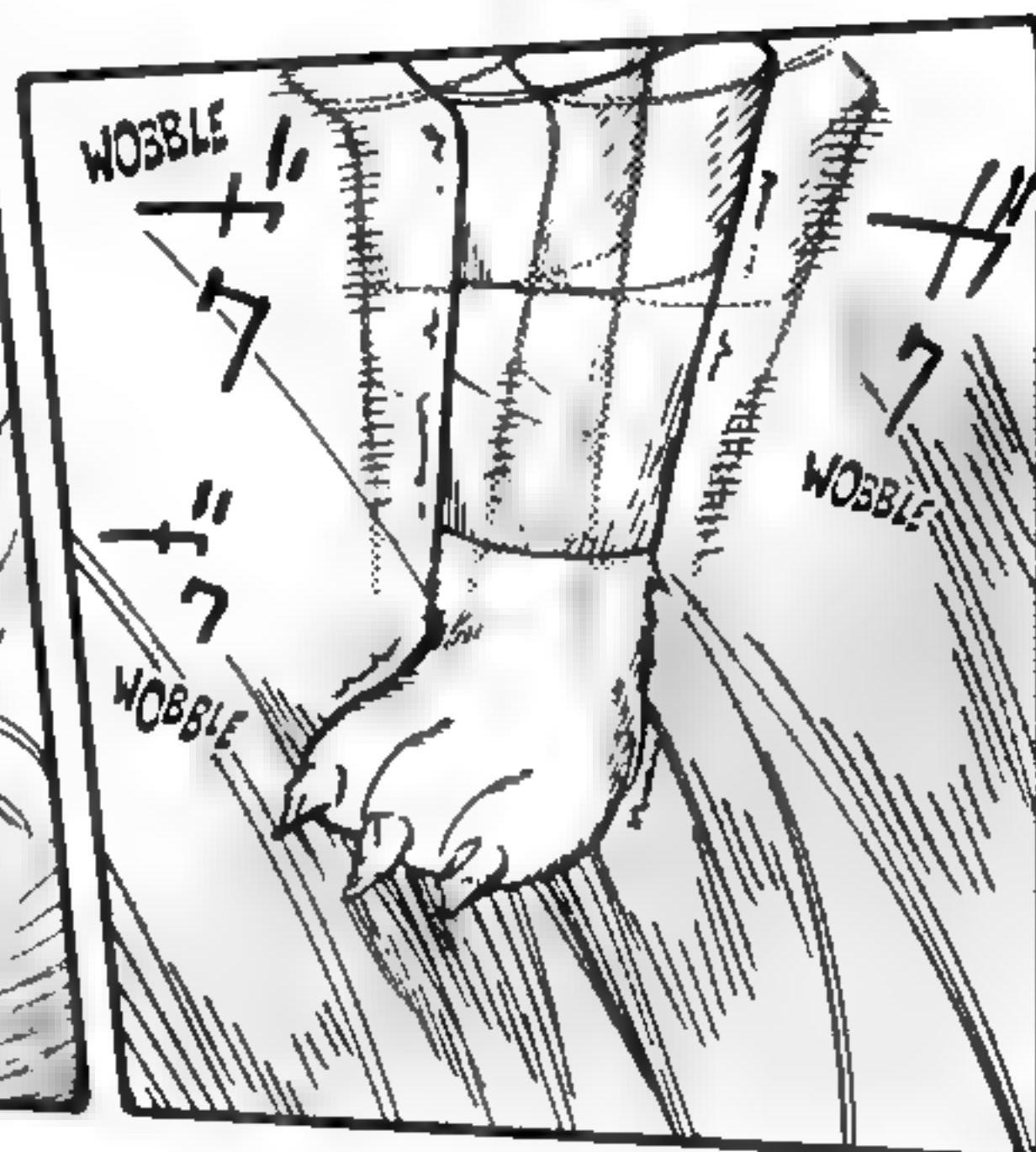
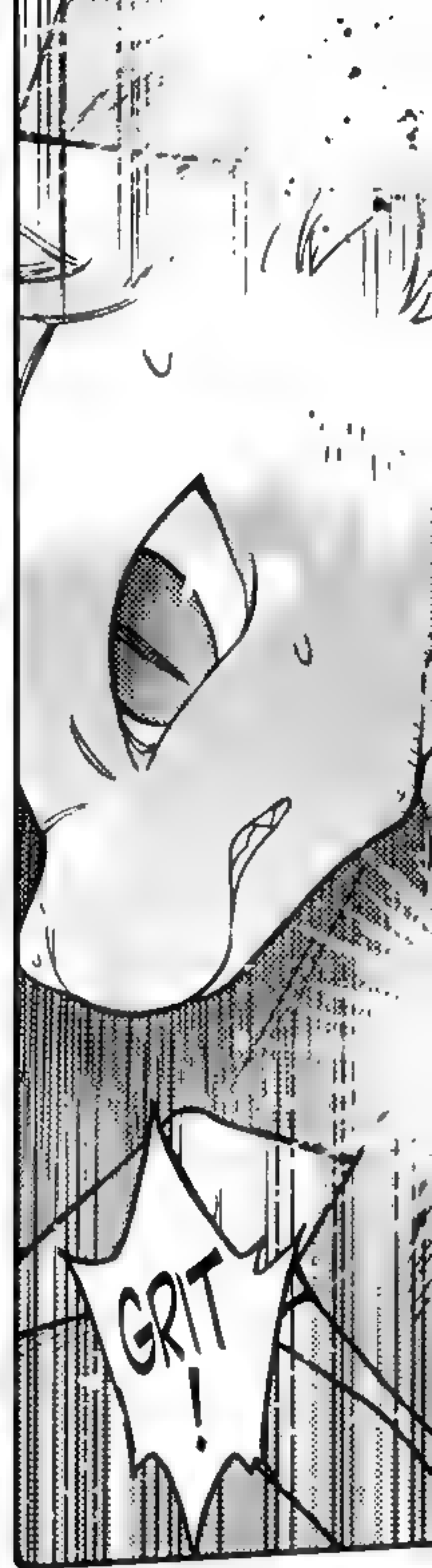


...HUH?

I DON'T  
CARE WHAT  
HAPPENS  
TO YOUR  
FRIEND.

BUT...

















NOW, YOU  
MAKE SURE  
TO STUDY  
HARD SO  
YOU DON'T  
COME OUT  
BEHIND  
IN LIFE!

I  
WILL  
!



HAH! THE SILLY LITTLE  
TWERP HANDED OVER  
10,000 FOR GARBAGE!

HE MUST BE SOME RICH  
BRAT FROM AROUND TOWN.  
PROBABLY HASN'T EVEN  
STARTED LEARNING ARITHMETIC!



IN ANY OTHER  
SITUATION, IT  
WOULD'VE AROUSED  
SUSPICION—BUT ALV  
KNEW ETOHMAS WAS  
TOO WORKED UP TO  
THINK STRAIGHT AND  
TOOK ADVANTAGE  
OF HIS GREED!

HE WALKED  
RIGHT INTO THE  
MIDDLE OF THAT  
SCENE AND MAN-  
AGED TO GET  
THE BOOK HE  
WANTED!

HE'S  
GOOD!



...?



NOW,  
THEN  
...

BUT  
WHAT'S  
THAT  
BOOK HE  
WENT TO  
ALL THE  
TROUBLE  
FOR?





...?



HEY.

IF  
YOU CAN  
EXPLAIN  
TO ME THE  
SECRET  
OF THIS  
BOOK...

...IT'S  
YOURS.



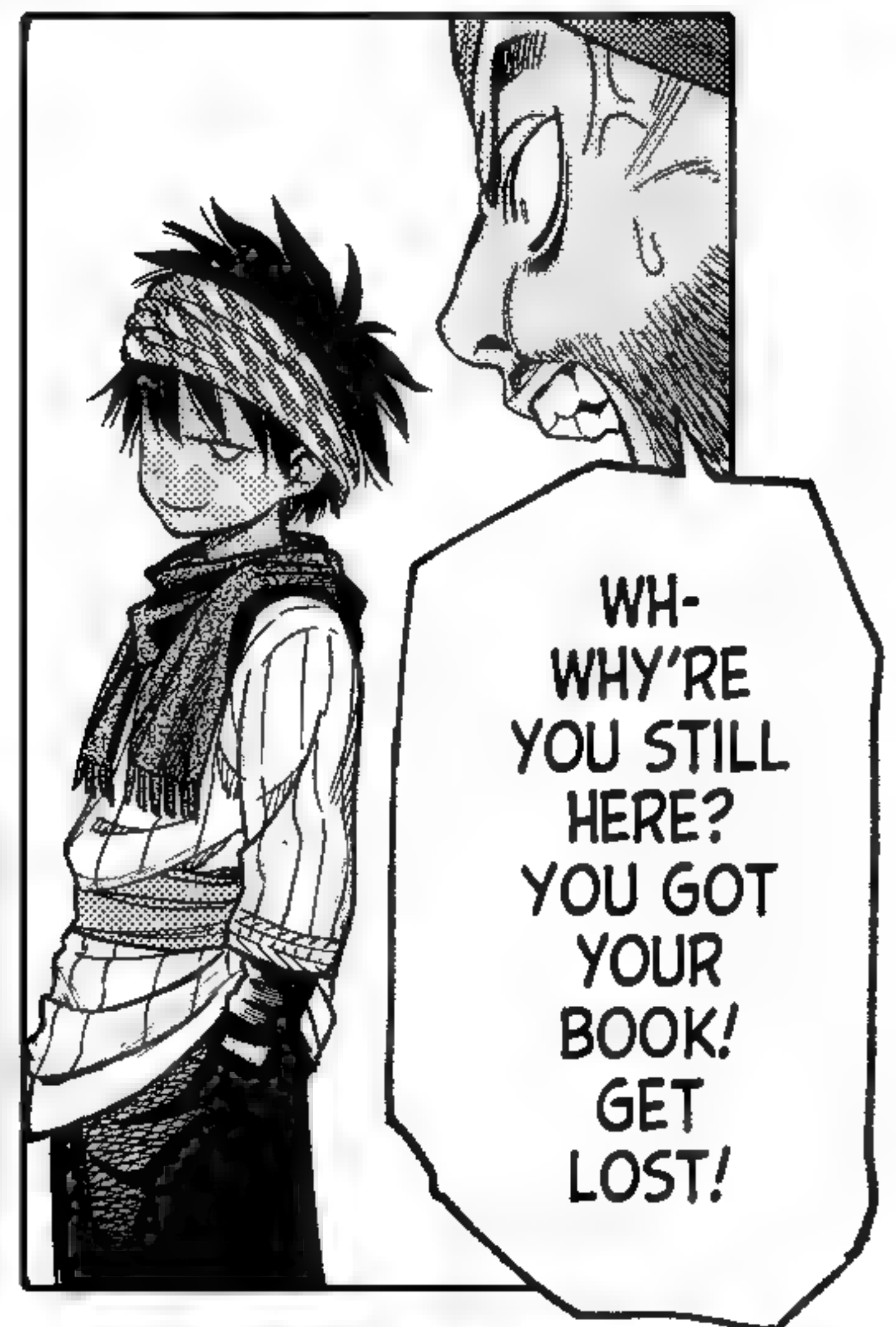
HUH  
...?

THE TWERP'S  
A COMPLETELY  
DIFFERENT  
PERSON NOW.



I'M  
TRYING  
TO GET  
THIS KID  
OUT OF  
YOUR  
HAIR.

HEY,  
SETTLE  
DOWN.  
I'M ON  
YOUR  
SIDE,  
OLD  
MAN.



WH-  
WHY'RE  
YOU STILL  
HERE?  
YOU GOT  
YOUR  
BOOK!  
GET  
LOST!



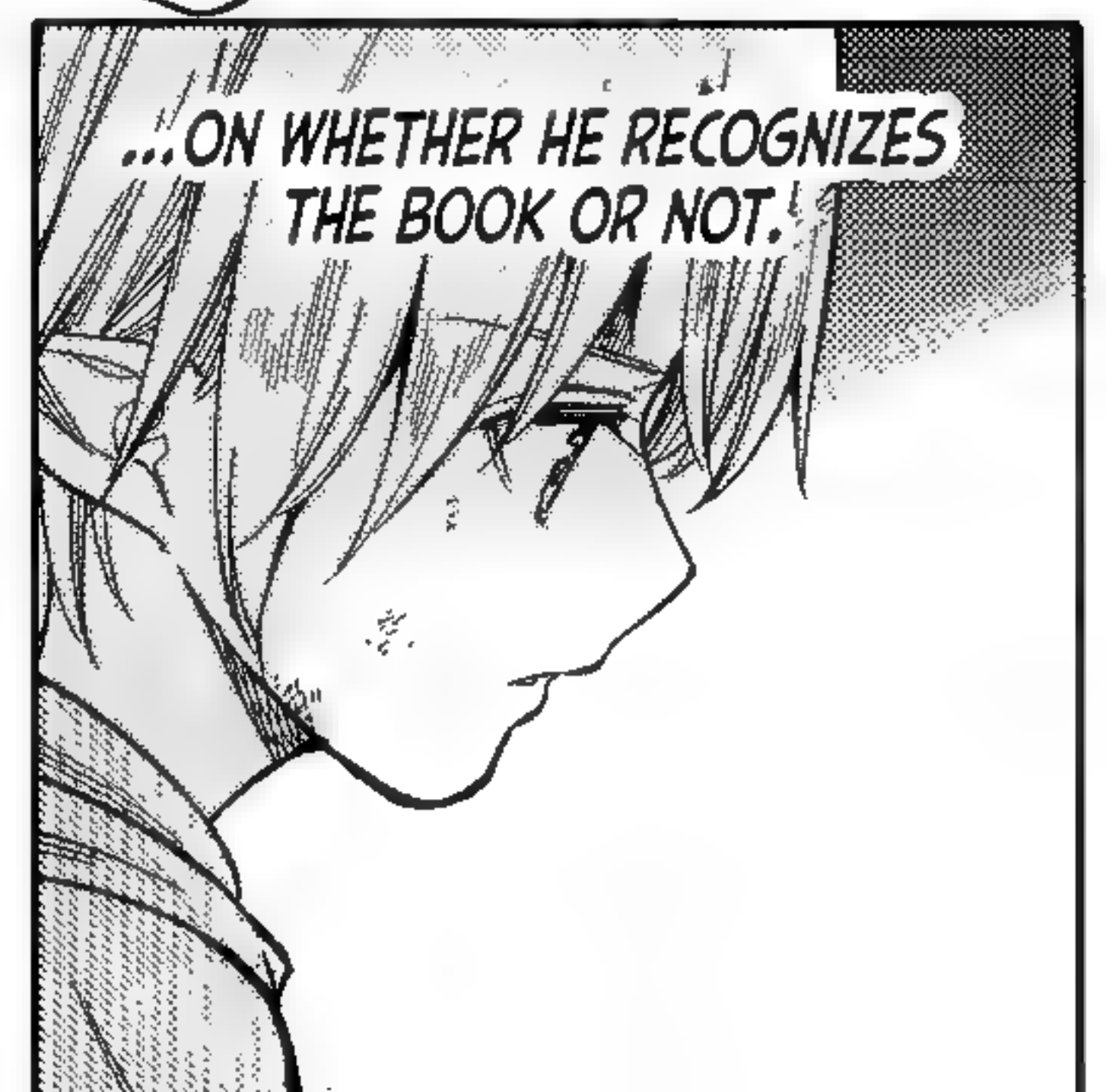
IS HE  
SUGGESTING  
THIS BOOK  
HAS SOME  
SPECIAL  
VALUE?

WHAT  
COULD  
ALV  
MEAN  
?



I'VE GIVEN HIM  
A CHANCE.

NOW IT  
DEPENDS  
...



...ON WHETHER HE RECOGNIZES  
THE BOOK OR NOT.



THERE ARE  
SEVERAL  
PROPERTIES  
OF A BOOK  
THAT COULD  
INCREASE ITS  
RARITY.

AN ITEM'S  
VALUE IS  
TIED TO HOW  
UNCOMMON  
IT IS.

A  
TIMELESS  
CLASSIC.  
THERE  
SHOULD BE  
COUNTLESS  
COPIES.

POEMS  
PENPED ON  
THE ROAD,  
BY  
ATLACAMANI.

A GREAT  
AUTHOR'S  
EARLY WORKS—  
BEFORE THEY  
MADE THEIR  
NAME—MIGHT  
NOT HAVE BEEN  
PRINTED IN  
GREAT QUANTITY.

IT COULD  
BE THE  
MAIDEN  
WORK OF  
SOME  
RENOWNED  
AUTHOR.

OCCASIONALLY  
CERTAIN PRINTINGS  
ARE NOTABLE,  
BUT I HAVE  
NO IDEA IF THIS  
ONE IS SPECIAL.

FIFTH  
EDITION.

A FIRST  
PRINTING  
WOULD BE  
PRIZED  
AMONG  
DEDICATED  
FANS.

A SMALL  
FIRST RUN  
BEFORE THE  
WORK GREW IN  
POPULARITY.

FOR A  
WELL-  
KNOWN  
WORK, THE  
EDITION  
COULD  
MATTER.

HE GRABBED  
IT FROM A  
PILE AS SOON  
AS HE WALKED  
INTO THE  
SHOP.

HE FLIPPED  
TO A RANDOM  
PAGE THEN  
TOOK IT TO THE  
PROPRIETOR.

ALV,  
DIDN'T  
CHECK  
ANY OF  
THESE  
THINGS.

WAIT.

IT'S  
BOUND IN  
LEATHER.

THAT'S  
BECOMING  
LESS  
COMMON,  
BUT NOT SO  
MUCH THAT  
IT WOULD  
COMMAND  
PARTICULAR  
VALUE.





WHICH MEANS  
HE FOUND IT  
BY LOOKING  
AT THE SIDE.



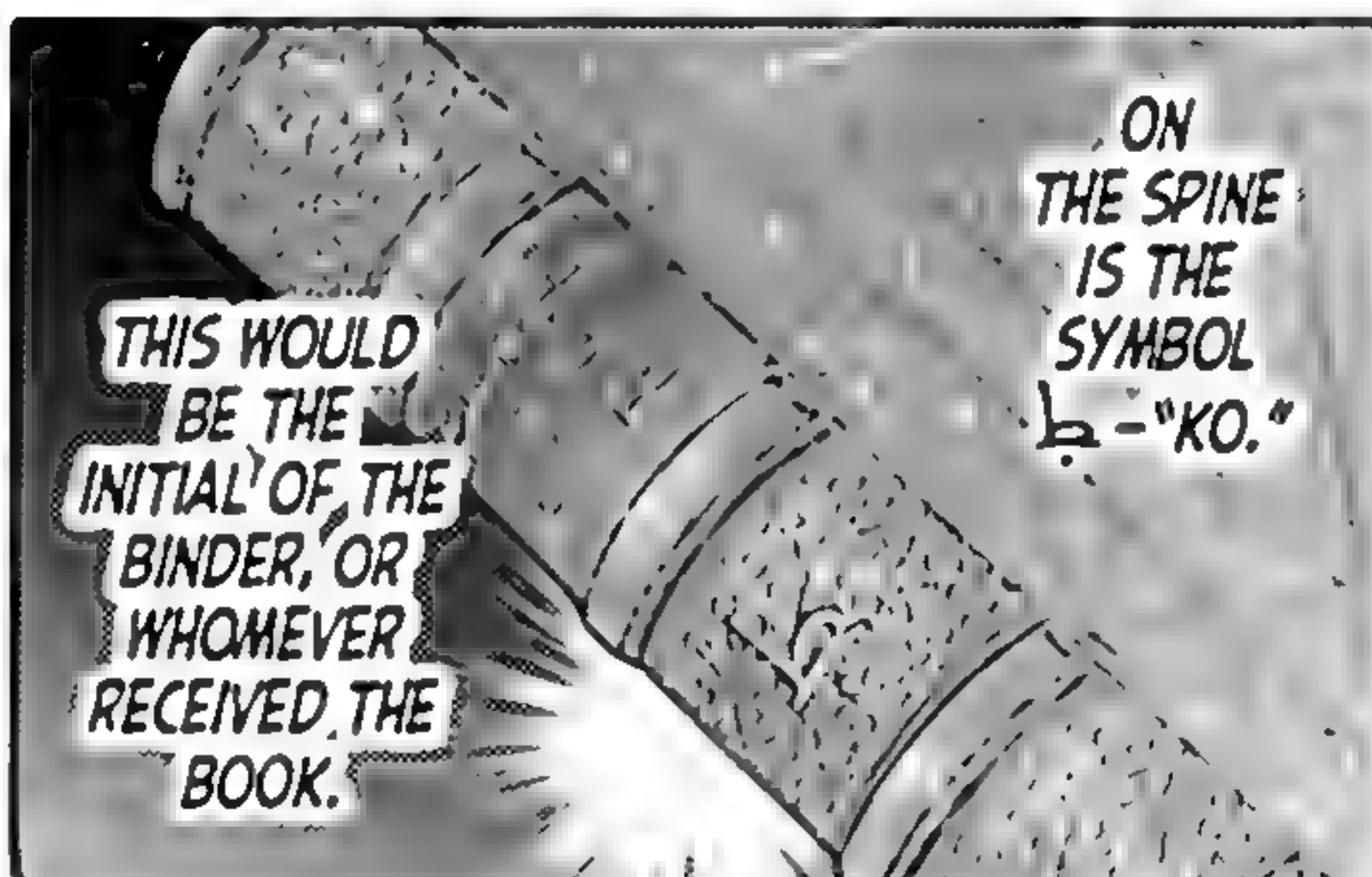
I CAN'T  
IMAGINE HE  
COMES IN,  
HERE OFTEN,  
SO WHATEVER'S  
SPECIAL MUST  
HAVE BEEN  
VISIBLE FROM  
THE WINDOW.

IT WAS  
TOWARD THE  
MIDDLE OF  
THE STACK,  
SO HE  
COULDN'T  
HAVE SEEN  
THE COVER.



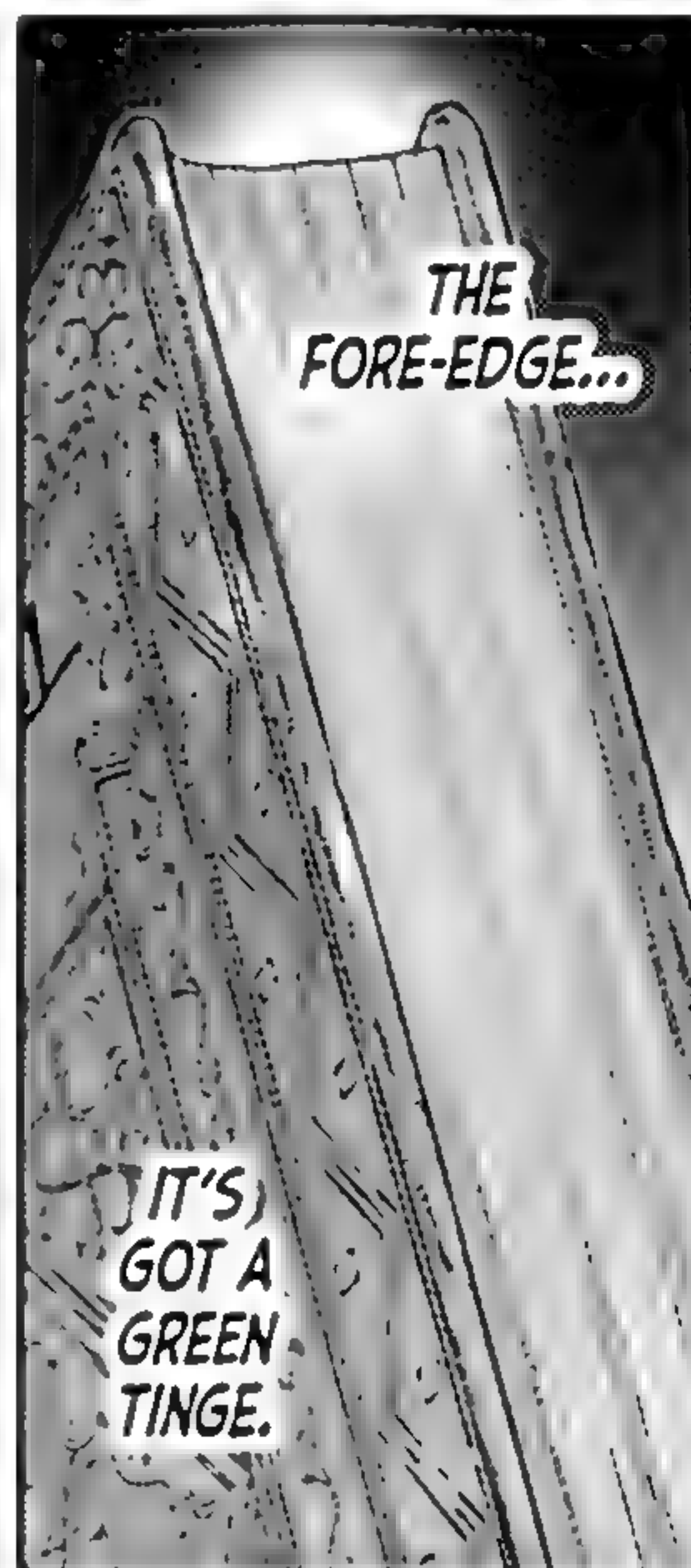
...THERE'S  
SOMETHING  
ABOUT THE  
PAPER.

SST..  
スス..



THIS WOULD  
BE THE  
INITIAL OF THE  
BINDER, OR  
WHOMEVER  
RECEIVED THE  
BOOK.

ON  
THE SPINE  
IS THE  
SYMBOL  
ハ - "KO."



THE  
FORE-EDGE...



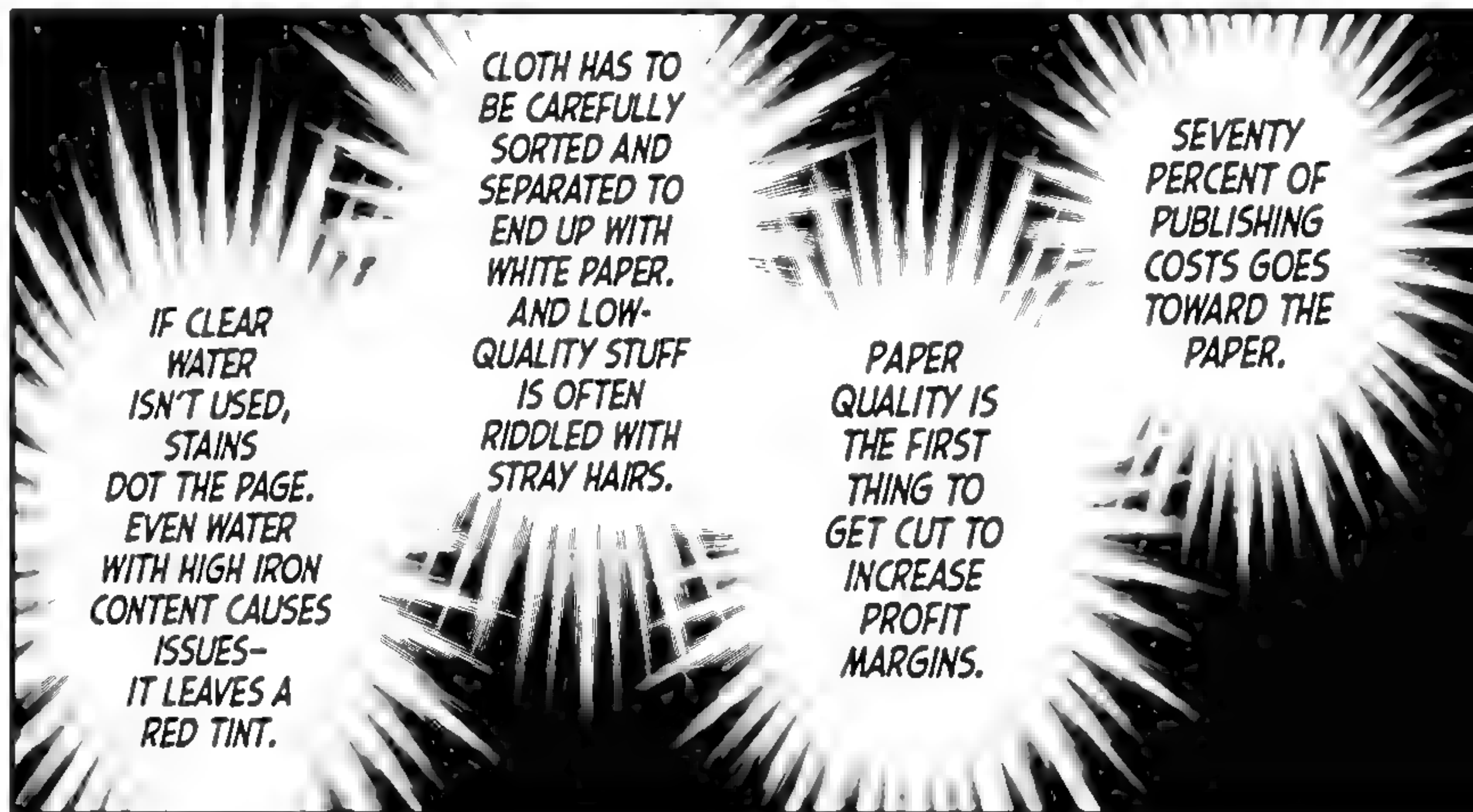
IF I OPEN IT TO A  
RANDOM PAGE...

...NOTHING  
IMMEDIATELY  
JUMPS OUT,  
BUT...



SOMEONE  
WENT TO  
A LOT OF  
TROUBLE  
TO MAKE  
PAPER  
THIS FINE.

MAYBE  
THERE'S A...



IF CLEAR  
WATER  
ISN'T USED,  
STAINS  
DOT THE PAGE.  
EVEN WATER  
WITH HIGH IRON  
CONTENT CAUSES  
ISSUES—  
IT LEAVES A  
RED TINT.

CLOTH HAS TO  
BE CAREFULLY  
SORTED AND  
SEPARATED TO  
END UP WITH  
WHITE PAPER.  
AND LOW-  
QUALITY STUFF  
IS OFTEN  
RIDDLED WITH  
STRAY HAIRS.

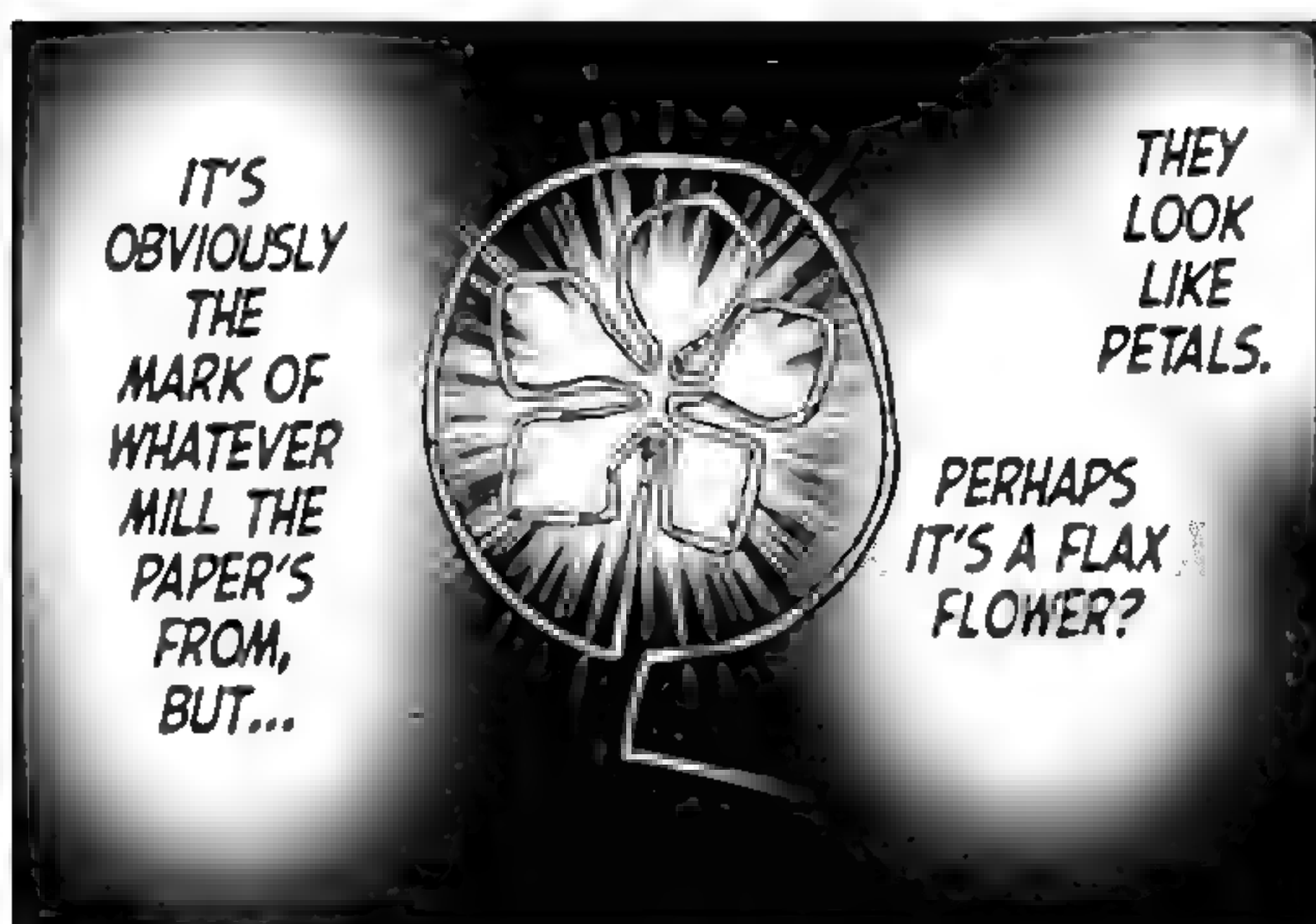
PAPER  
QUALITY IS  
THE FIRST  
THING TO  
GET CUT TO  
INCREASE  
PROFIT  
MARGINS.

SEVENTY  
PERCENT OF  
PUBLISHING  
COSTS GOES  
TOWARD THE  
PAPER.





**THERE IS!  
A WATERMARK!**



IT'S  
OBVIOUSLY  
THE  
MARK OF  
WHATEVER  
MILL THE  
PAPER'S  
FROM,  
BUT...

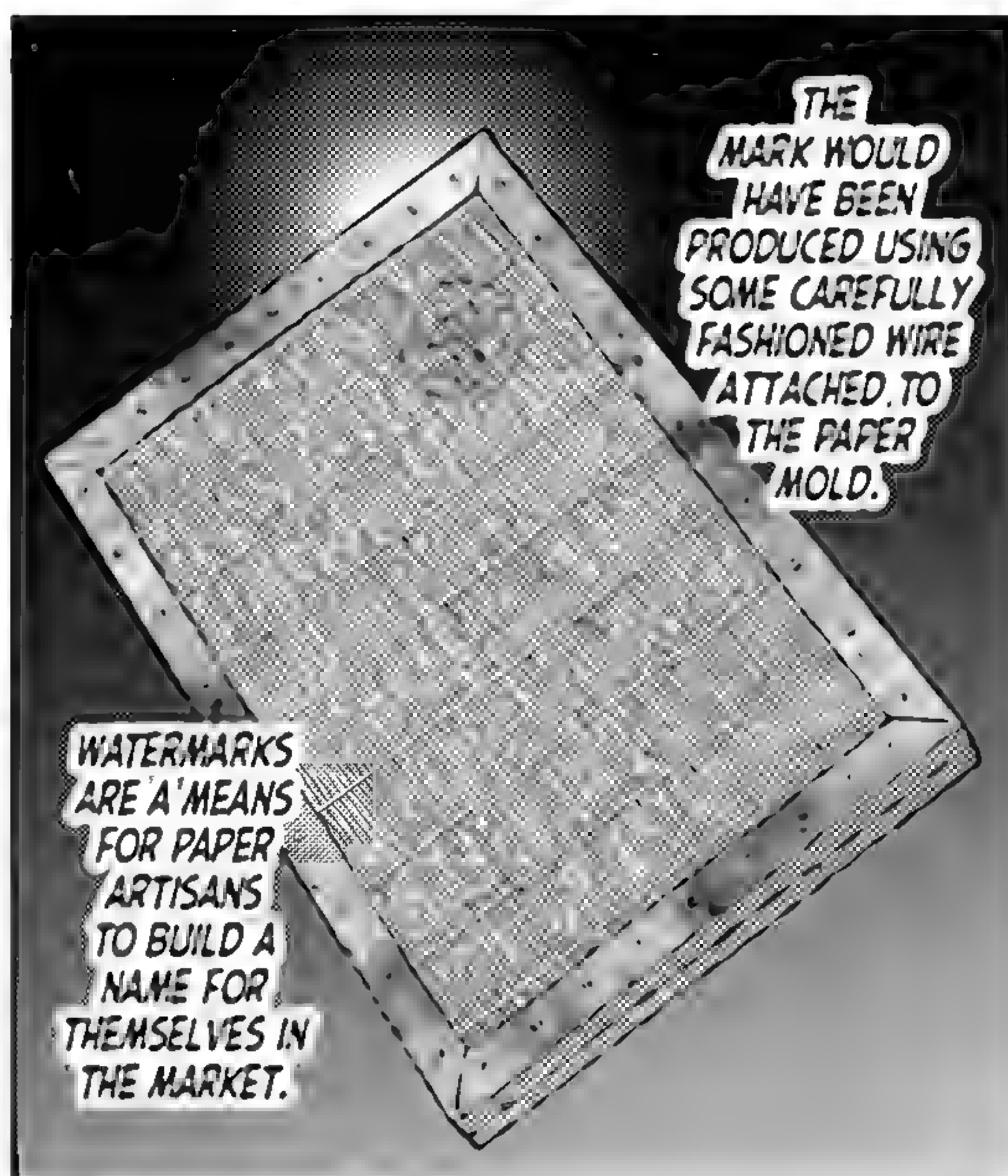
THEY  
LOOK  
LIKE  
PETALS.

PERHAPS  
IT'S A FLAX  
FLOWER?



NO.  
WHERE  
DID I HEAR  
ABOUT IT?

I KNOW.  
I'VE COME  
ACROSS THIS.  
WHERE DID  
I READ  
ABOUT IT?



THE  
MARK WOULD  
HAVE BEEN  
PRODUCED USING  
SOME CAREFULLY  
FASHIONED WIRE  
ATTACHED TO  
THE PAPER  
MOLD.

WATERMARKS  
ARE A MEANS  
FOR PAPER  
ARTISANS  
TO BUILD A  
NAME FOR  
THEMSELVES IN  
THE MARKET.



"HEY, THEO.  
EVER HEARD  
OF THIS  
PLACE?"

THINK.

IF YOU  
CAN'T RECALL  
SOMETHING  
LIKE THIS,  
YOU'VE GOT  
NO HOPE OF  
BECOMING A  
KAFNA.

THINK,  
THEO.





A LONG TIME  
AGO, THERE  
WAS THIS  
BOOKBINDER  
NAMED  
**KONRAMIL**.  
HE GATHERED  
TOGETHER  
THE GREATEST  
ARTISANS OF  
THE DAY TO  
MAKE PERFECT  
BOOKS.



THE  
**KONRAMIL**  
ATELIER?



A QUICK  
WAY TO  
IDENTIFY  
ONE IS THE  
EDGE OF  
THE TEXT-  
BLOCK-IT'LL  
BE SLIGHTLY  
GREEN.

FEW WERE  
PRODUCED,  
AND A SINGLE  
COPY CAN  
COMMAND  
PRICES OF  
OVER A  
MILLION  
QUIPU!

...AND  
BOUND  
THEM IN  
THE FINEST  
CALFSKIN.

...PRINTED  
THEM ON  
GORGEOUS  
AHMAKIQ  
PAPER WITH A  
FLAX-SHAPED  
WATERMARK...

THEY  
PICKED OUT  
10 VOLUMES  
THAT HAD WON  
PRESTIGIOUS  
AWARDS FOR  
LITERATURE...



...DON'T  
TELL ME  
THIS IS  
ANOTHER  
**GRIMOIRE**.

SURE,  
I'D  
LIKE TO,  
BUT...



HOW  
ABOUT  
YOU,  
THEO?  
WOULDN'T  
YOU LOVE  
TO SEE  
ONE?!

OH,  
WHAT I  
WOULDN'T  
GIVE...





YOU DIDN'T SEE ANYTHING! YOU WERE OUT COLD!

...OF YOU STANDING HEROICALLY AMONG THE FLAMES!

MY, I'LL NEVER FORGET THE SIGHT ...

YOU HAVE NO IDEA WHAT YOU'RE TALKING ABOUT.



OH, BELIEVE ME, I AM DONE WITH THOSE.

THE KONRAMIL EDITIONS ARE COMPLETELY HARMLESS!



"YEAH, YOU'RE RIGHT!"

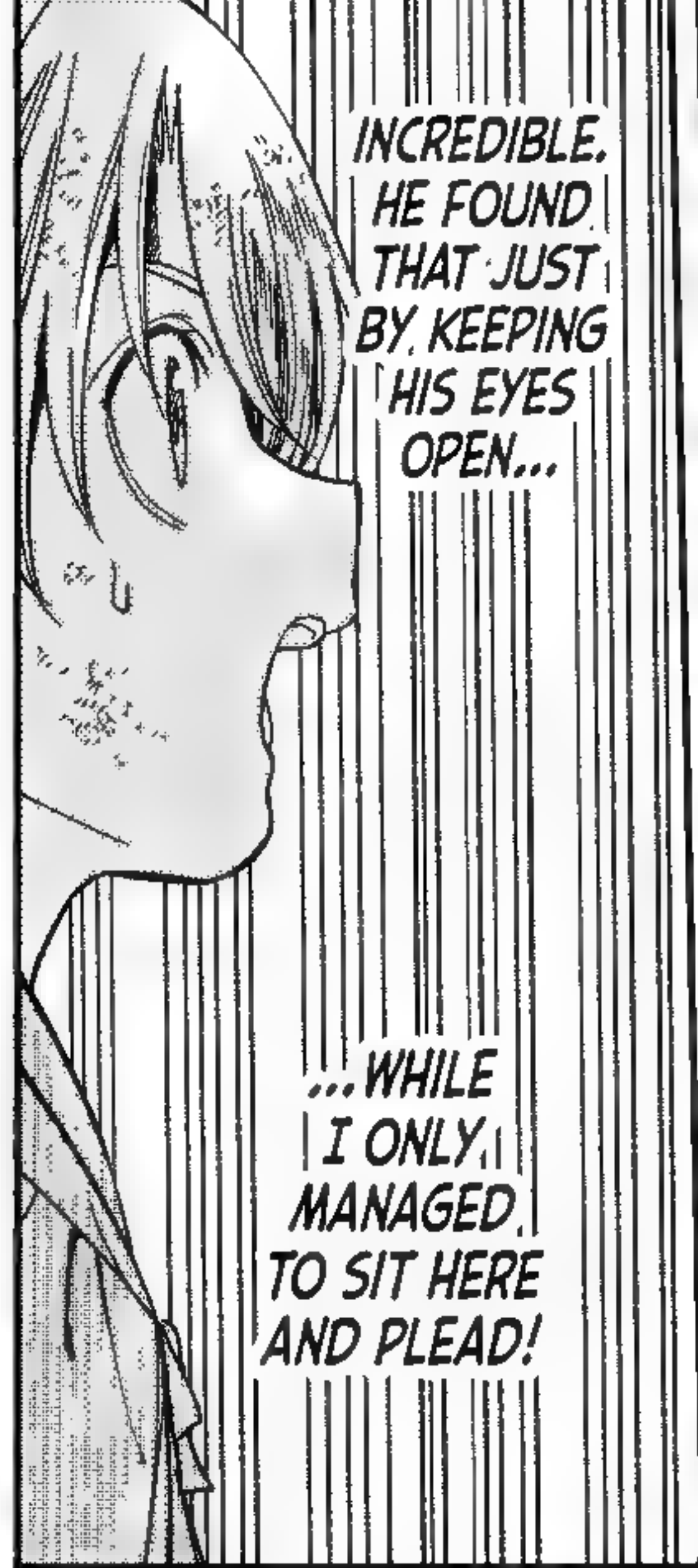
"CAN'T HURT KNOWING A BIT ABOUT THE KONRAMIL EDITIONS."

"ANYWAY, YOU NEVER KNOW WHAT KIND OF QUESTIONS THEY'LL THROW AT YOU DURING THE KAFNA EXAM."

IT'S A NA'NII - ONE OF THE KONRAMIL ATELIER'S SPECIAL EDITIONS!

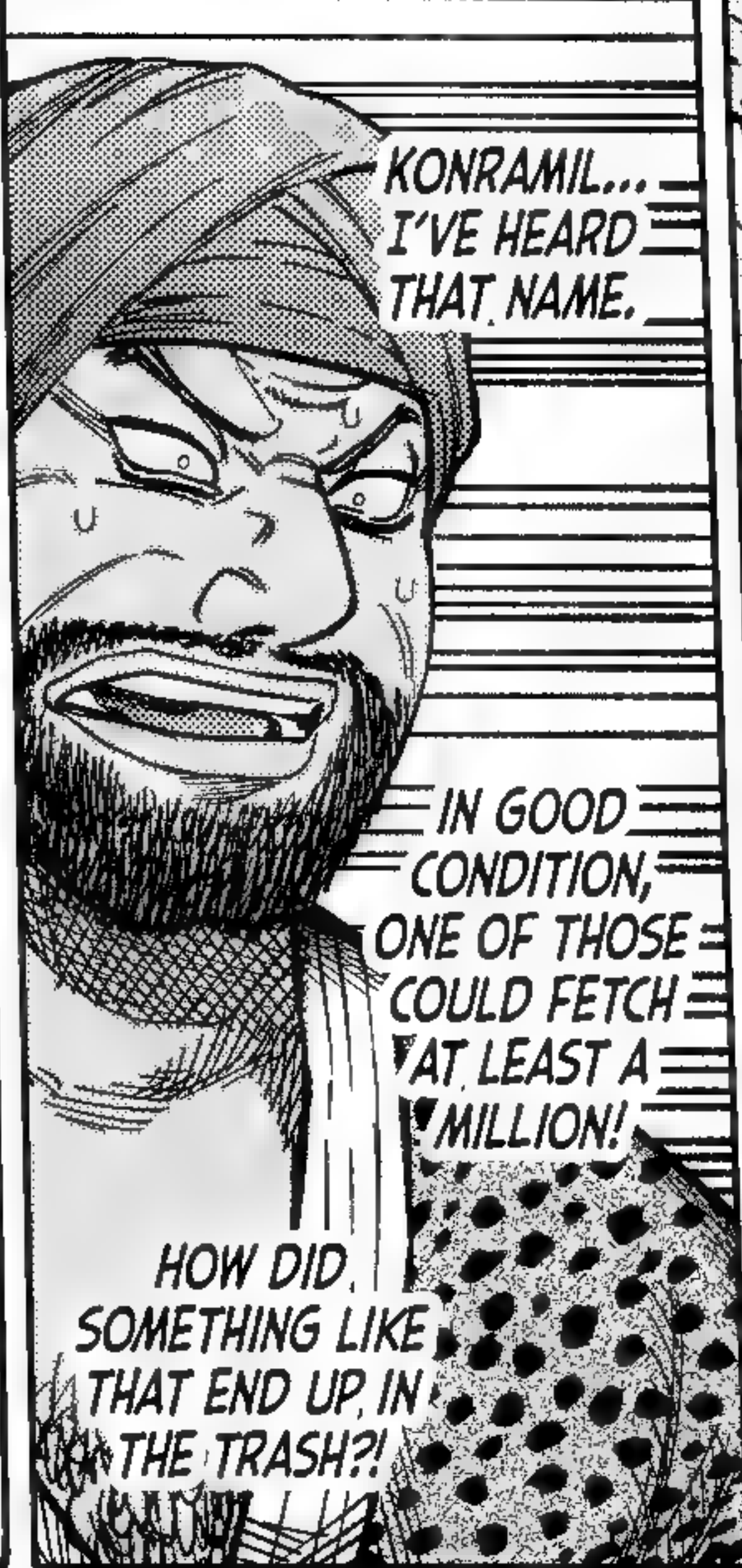
HEH. DIDN'T EXPECT YOU'D EVEN KNOW THE NAME.





INCREDIBLE.  
HE FOUND  
THAT JUST  
BY KEEPING  
HIS EYES  
OPEN...

...WHILE  
I ONLY  
MANAGED  
TO SIT HERE  
AND PLEAD!



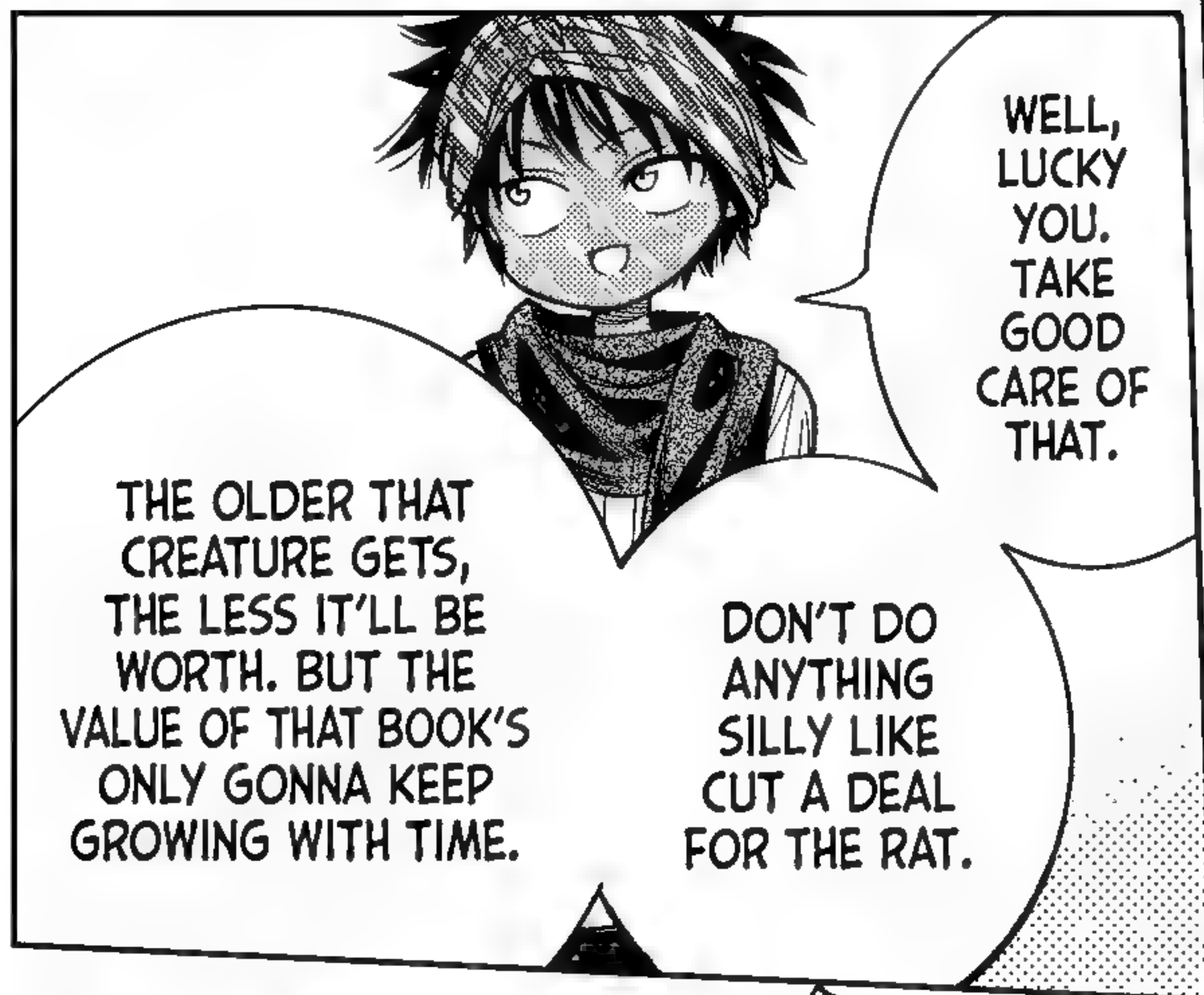
KONRAMIL...  
I'VE HEARD  
THAT NAME.

IN GOOD  
CONDITION,  
ONE OF THOSE  
COULD FETCH  
AT LEAST A  
MILLION!

HOW DID  
SOMETHING LIKE  
THAT END UP IN  
THE TRASH?!



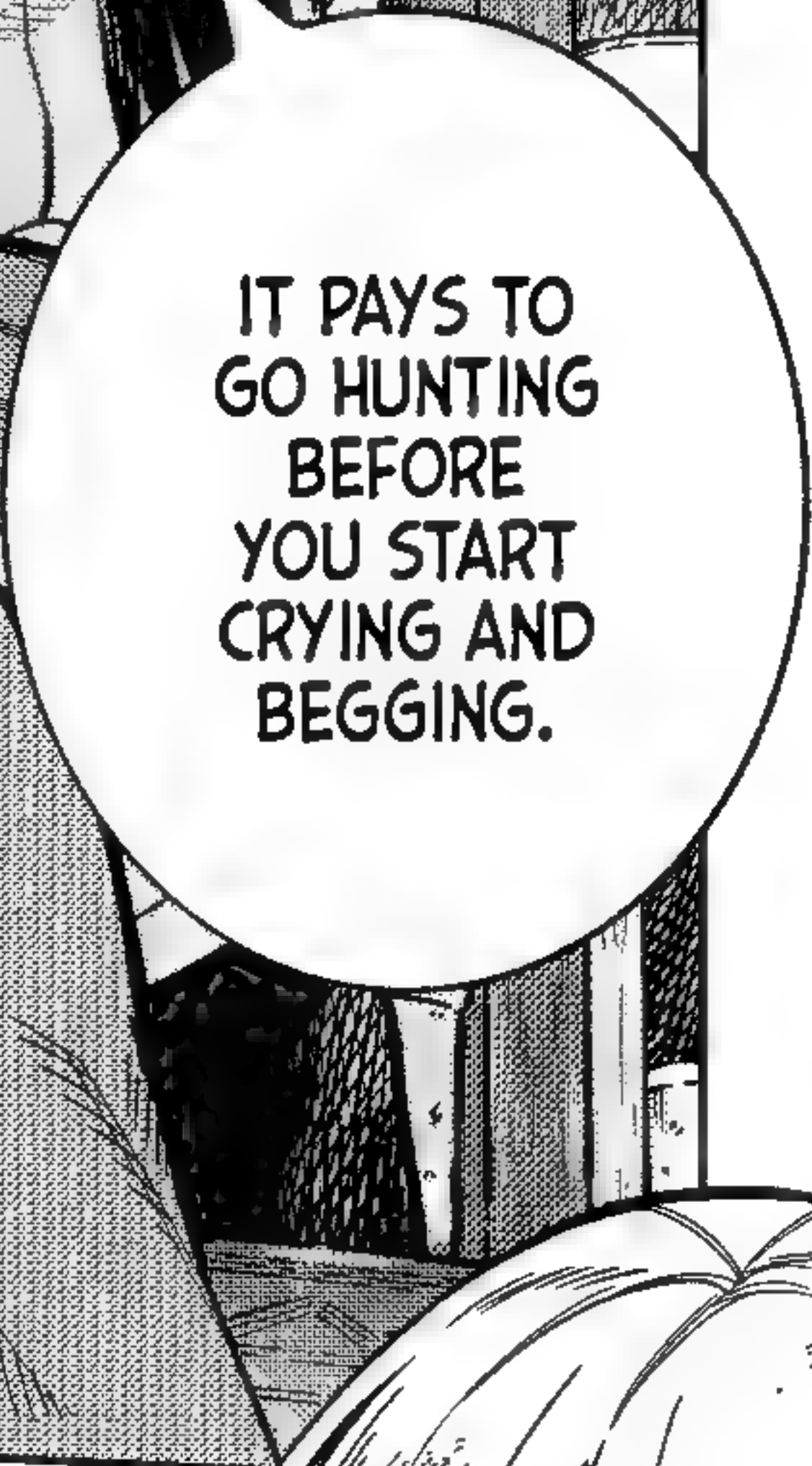
THERE'S  
ALWAYS A  
SOLUTION  
HIDING  
NEARBY.



WELL,  
LUCKY  
YOU.  
TAKE  
GOOD  
CARE OF  
THAT.

THE OLDER THAT  
CREATURE GETS,  
THE LESS IT'LL BE  
WORTH. BUT THE  
VALUE OF THAT BOOK'S  
ONLY GONNA KEEP  
GROWING WITH TIME.

DON'T DO  
ANYTHING  
SILLY LIKE  
CUT A DEAL  
FOR THE RAT.



IT PAYS TO  
GO HUNTING  
BEFORE  
YOU START  
CRYING AND  
BEGGING.



ABSO-  
LUTELY  
NOT!

BOTH  
BELONG  
TO ME!

LUNGE

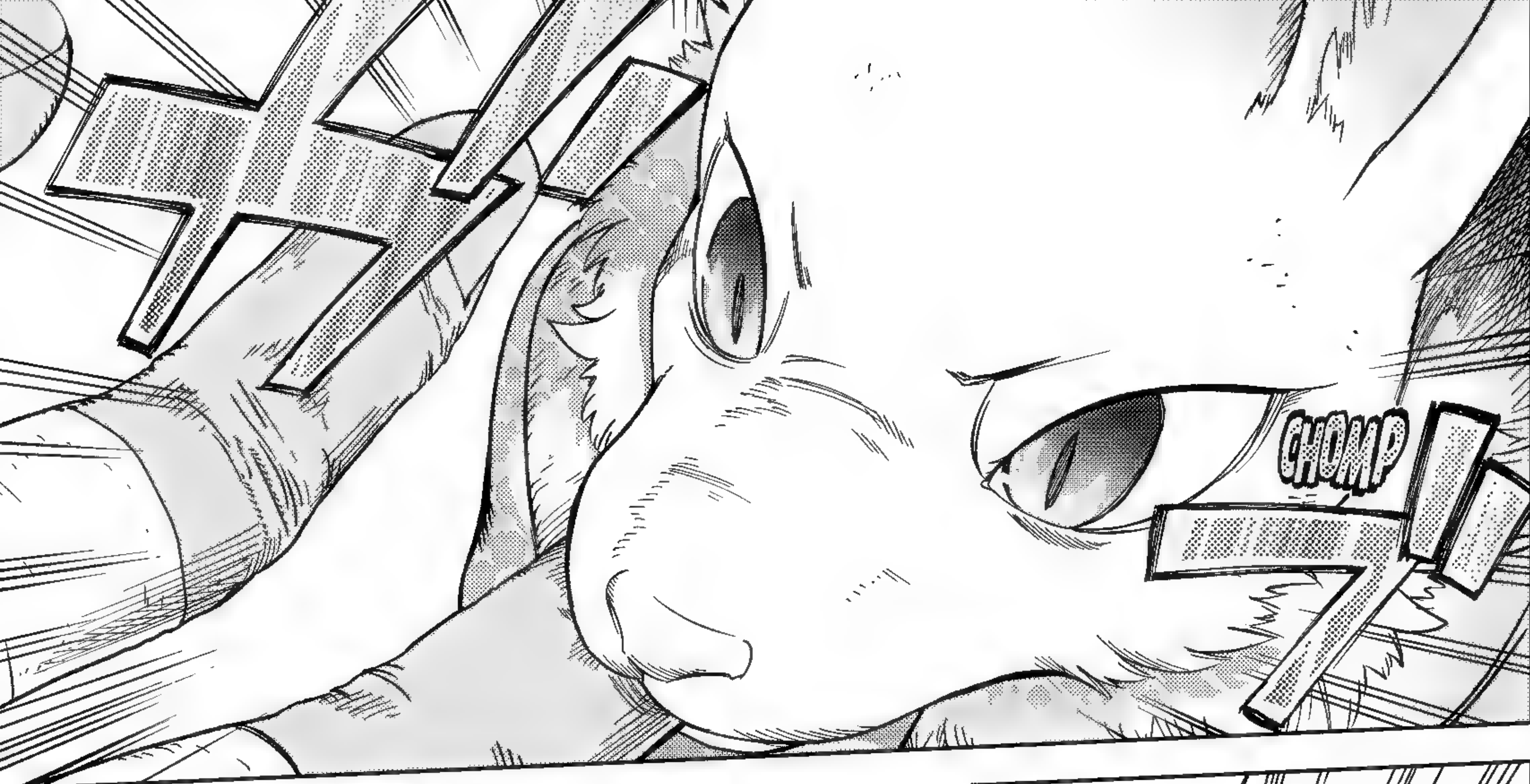
NOW  
YOU'VE  
DONE IT!

AWW!

I'LL  
TRADE  
YOU THE  
BOOK  
FOR THE  
CITLAPOL!







IGNO-  
RANCE IS  
LAZINESS,  
RIGHT?

"MAKE  
SURE TO  
STUDY  
HARD SO  
YOU DON'T  
COME OUT  
BEHIND IN  
LIFE!"



HEY,  
WHY NOT  
ACCEPT?  
HE'S GIVING  
YOU A  
STEAL.

NEVER!  
THEY  
WERE  
BOTH  
MINE TO  
BEGIN  
WITH!



I'VE NEVER  
SEEN SO MUCH  
STUBBORNNESS  
IN ONE ROOM.

*Kind of  
incredible,  
really.*

I WILL  
**NOT**  
STAND  
FOR  
THIS  
!!



HEH.

CREAK



JUST GET  
MY STUFF  
BACK AND  
TIE THESE  
BRATS  
UP!

TEACH  
THEM A  
LESSON  
THEY'LL  
NEVER  
FORGET  
!!

OF  
COURSE!  
YOU  
TWO!  
I'LL PAY  
YOUR  
PRICE!





OF COURSE!








PLENTY  
OF YOU  
KIDS PASS  
THROUGH  
TOWN THIS  
TIME OF  
YEAR.

HOW'D  
YOU  
KNOW  
THAT?



YOU KIDS ARE  
ON YOUR WAY  
TO TAKE THE  
KAFNA EXAM,  
RIGHT?

GRIP.  
[symbol]



BUT  
YOU...  
YOU'VE  
GOT  
SOME-  
THING I  
DIDN'T.



ENDED  
UP HERE  
IN THIS  
DUMP.

Y'KNOW,  
I CAME HERE  
FROM THE  
COUNTRY  
WITH BIG  
DREAMS  
OF BEIN' A  
SCHOLAR.



YOU'VE  
GOT THE  
EYES OF  
A MAN  
WHO'S  
OFF TO  
BATTLE.

THAT,  
AND I CAN  
SEE IT IN  
YOUR  
FACE.



GIVE  
THAT  
EXAM  
A RUN  
FOR ITS  
MONEY.

THANKS FOR  
SHOWING ME  
SOMETHING  
GOOD TODAY.

WHAP





I'LL DEAL  
WITH HIM.  
LEAVE THE  
BOOK, TAKE  
THE RAT,  
AND GET  
ON OUT  
OF HERE.

URK!



HURRY  
UP AND  
GET MY  
ITEM  
BACK!

WH-WHAT  
ARE YOU  
DOING?!



STUFF IT,  
OLD MAN!



GUARDS!  
THANK  
GOODNESS  
YOU'RE  
HERE!

I-I'LL  
NEVER  
AGREE  
TO A  
TRADE!



HE'S  
IMPOS-  
SIBLE  
...

NO!  
I'M NOT  
LEAVING  
UNTIL HE  
AGREES!



F-FINE!  
YOU'VE  
GOT A  
DEAL!

ACK!  
A BRIBE'S  
GONNA SET  
ME WORSE  
THAN ANY OF  
THIS!



HMPH.  
WELL  
PLAYED.

WHEN  
THE  
GUARDS  
ASK,  
NONE OF  
THIS HAP-  
PENED!



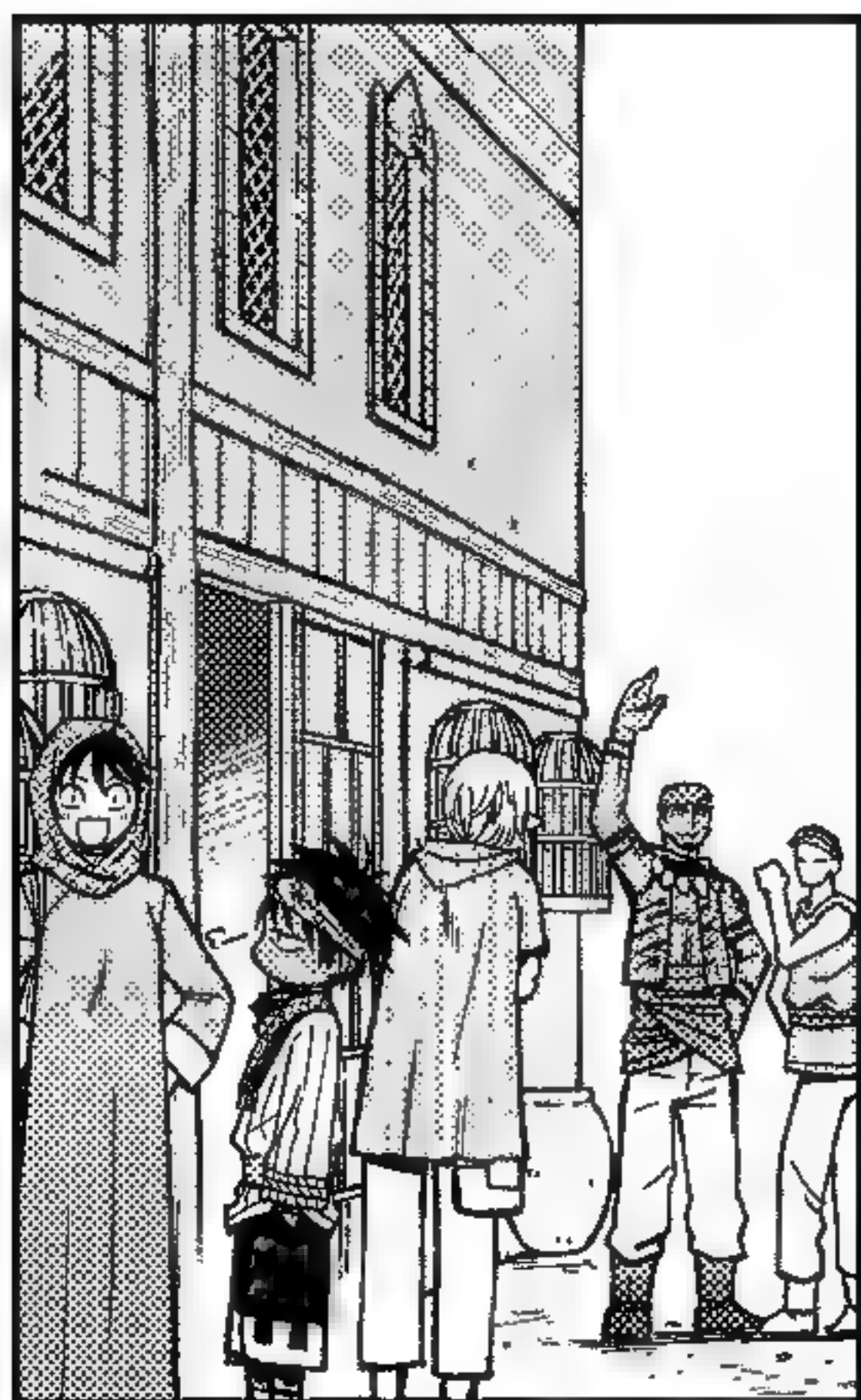
THERE'S  
A FIGHT  
GOING  
ON  
INSIDE  
THIS  
SHOP!

?!





SO...



I COULD DEFINITELY BE AN ACTRESS!

I DON'T WANT ANY TROUBLE IN HERE!

NOW GO ALREADY!



I STILL HAVEN'T EVEN ASKED IF THIS IS SOMETHING SHE WANTED.

I'M EMBARRASSED TO SAY IT, BUT I REALLY DIDN'T HAVE ANY PLAN.



GOT HIS 10,000 QUIPU BACK, TOO

...WHAT'RE YOU GONNA DO WITH THE DUALTAIL?

"And give back that coin!"



I ONLY HELPED OUT SO WE COULD ALL MAKE IT TO THE EXAM ON TIME.

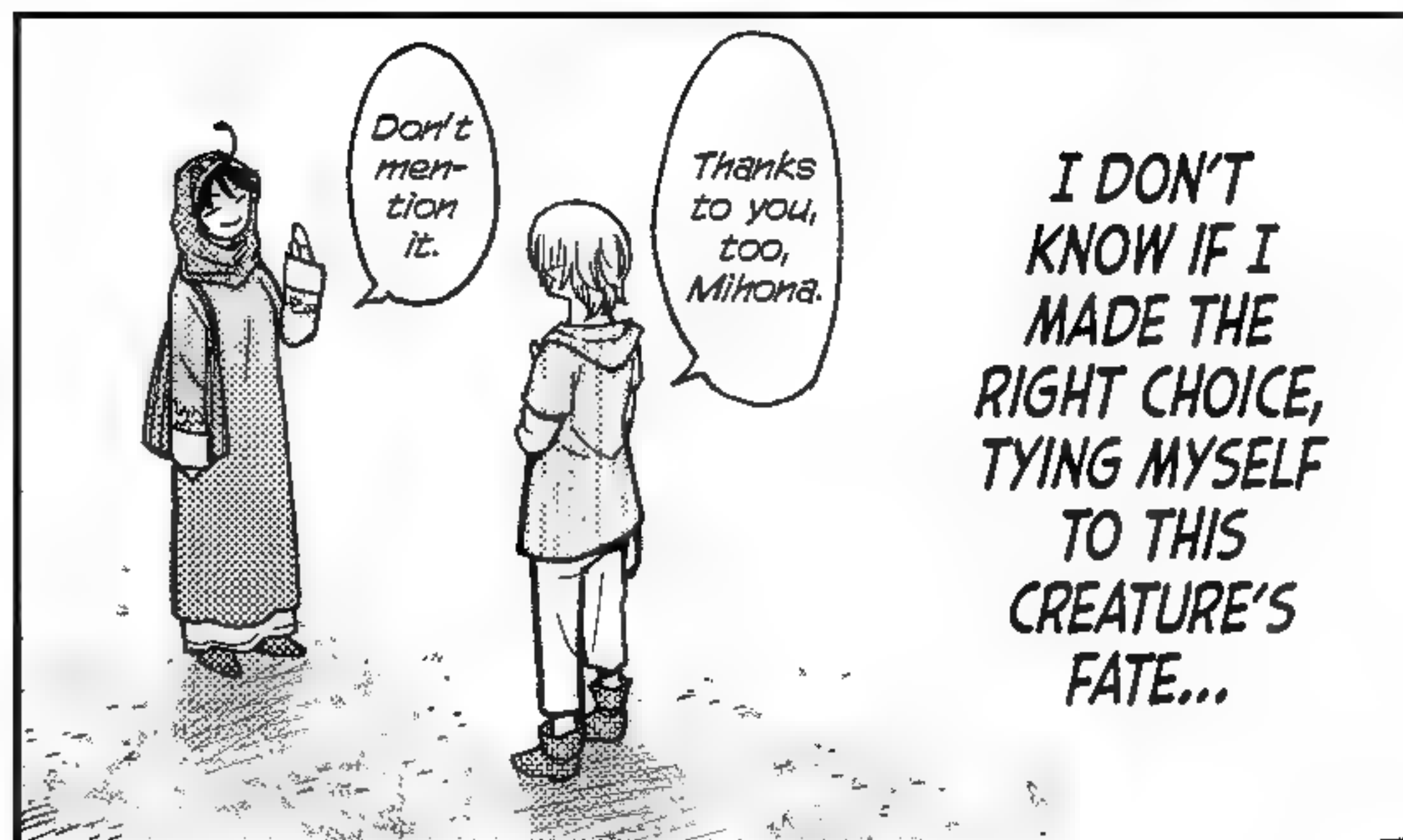
DON'T GET THE WRONG IDEA.



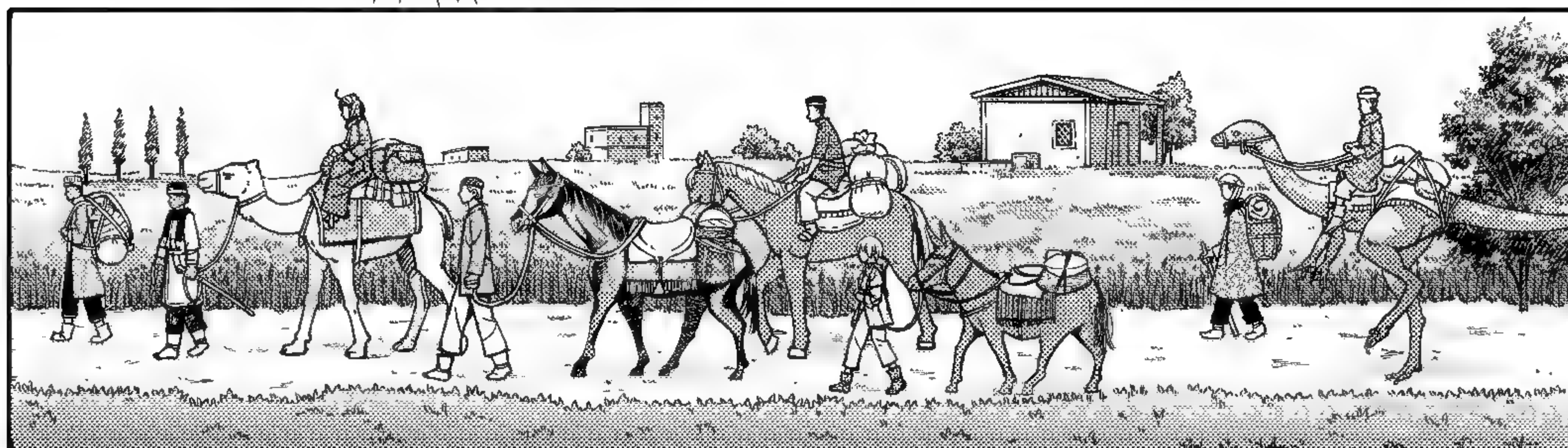
THANK YOU FOR YOUR HELP!

HEH! WELL, YOU'VE GOT TIME TO THINK IT OVER.





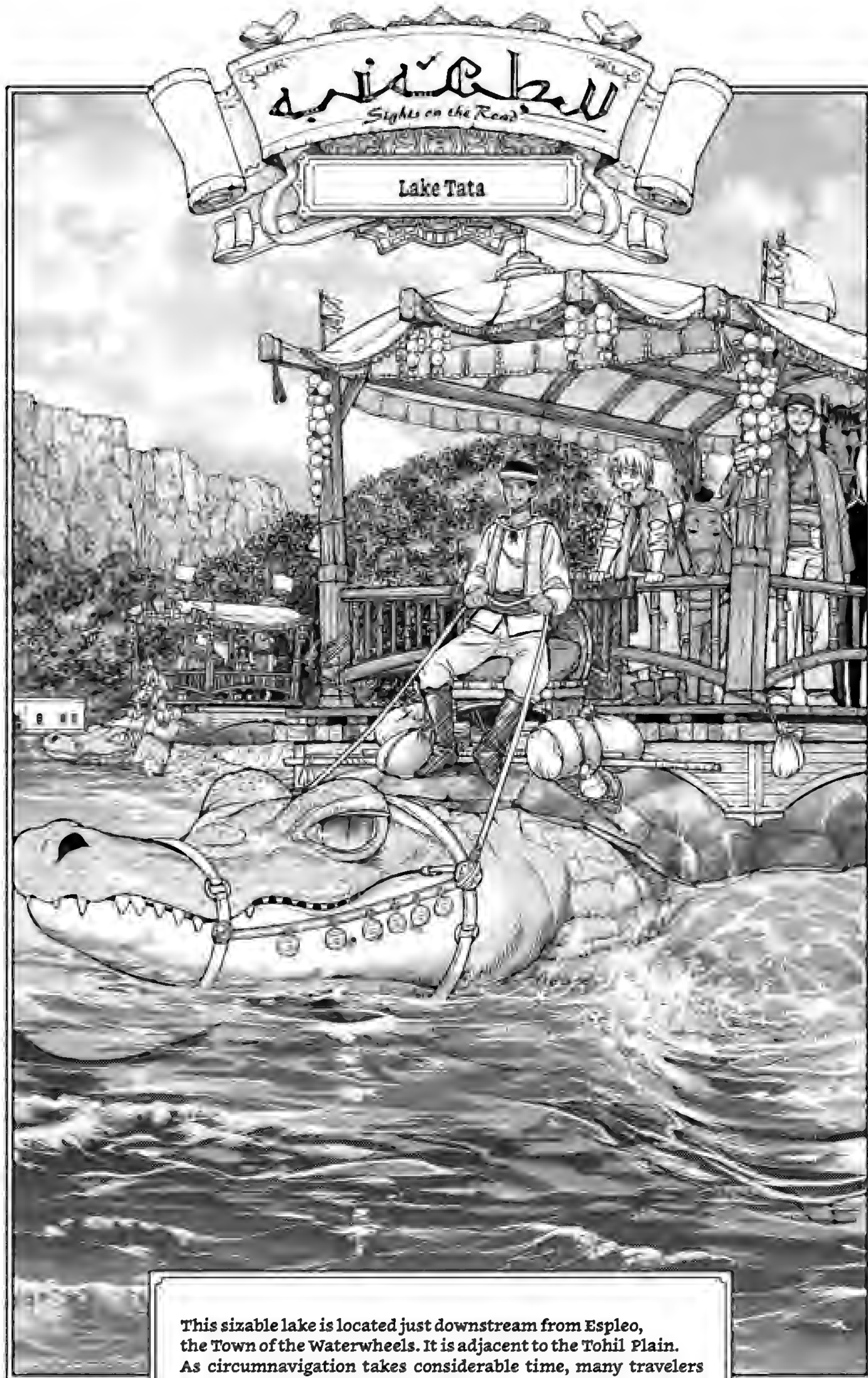












This sizable lake is located just downstream from Espleo, the Town of the Waterwheels. It is adjacent to the Tohil Plain. As circumnavigation takes considerable time, many travelers opt to cross the lake via ferries driven by Bardscale Alligator.




# سights on the Road

## The Tohil Plain



This vast grassland stretches between Tata Lake and Aftzaak. Packs of Mokoh rove the plain, following the movements of the sun. These terrestrial lizards are not seen in the colder northern parts of the continent.





THIS IS THE  
CASTLE IN WHICH  
THE GREAT MAGUS  
STORED TEXTS  
DURING THE WAR.  
IT'S WHERE THE  
CENTRAL LIBRARY  
BEGAN!

IT'S BACAB  
CASTLE!  
HEADQUARTERS  
OF THE  
CONTINENTAL  
LIBRARIES!

AFTZAAK  
EASTERN  
CAMPSITE



AND  
NONE TOO  
SOON. ENDED  
UP CUTTIN'  
THIS PRETTY  
CLOSE.

WE  
REALLY  
MADE IT.  
WE'RE IN  
AFTZAAK!



...WE'RE  
AT ODDS.  
IF WE  
SHOULD  
SPEAK  
AGAIN,  
IT WILL  
BE AS  
KAFNA.

NOW  
THAT  
WE'RE  
AT THE  
CITY  
...



SORRY,  
THEO...

...BUT OUR  
CAMARADERIE  
ENDS HERE.

MIHONA!  
IT'S  
AFTZAAK!  
WE'RE  
REALLY  
HERE!

DO  
YOU THINK  
ALL THESE  
PEOPLE  
ARE HERE  
TO TAKE  
THE TEST?



TIME  
TO CRAM  
ALL THE  
ESSENTIALS  
ONE MORE  
TIME!

I THINK  
SHE WANTS  
TO BE ALONE  
TO STUDY!

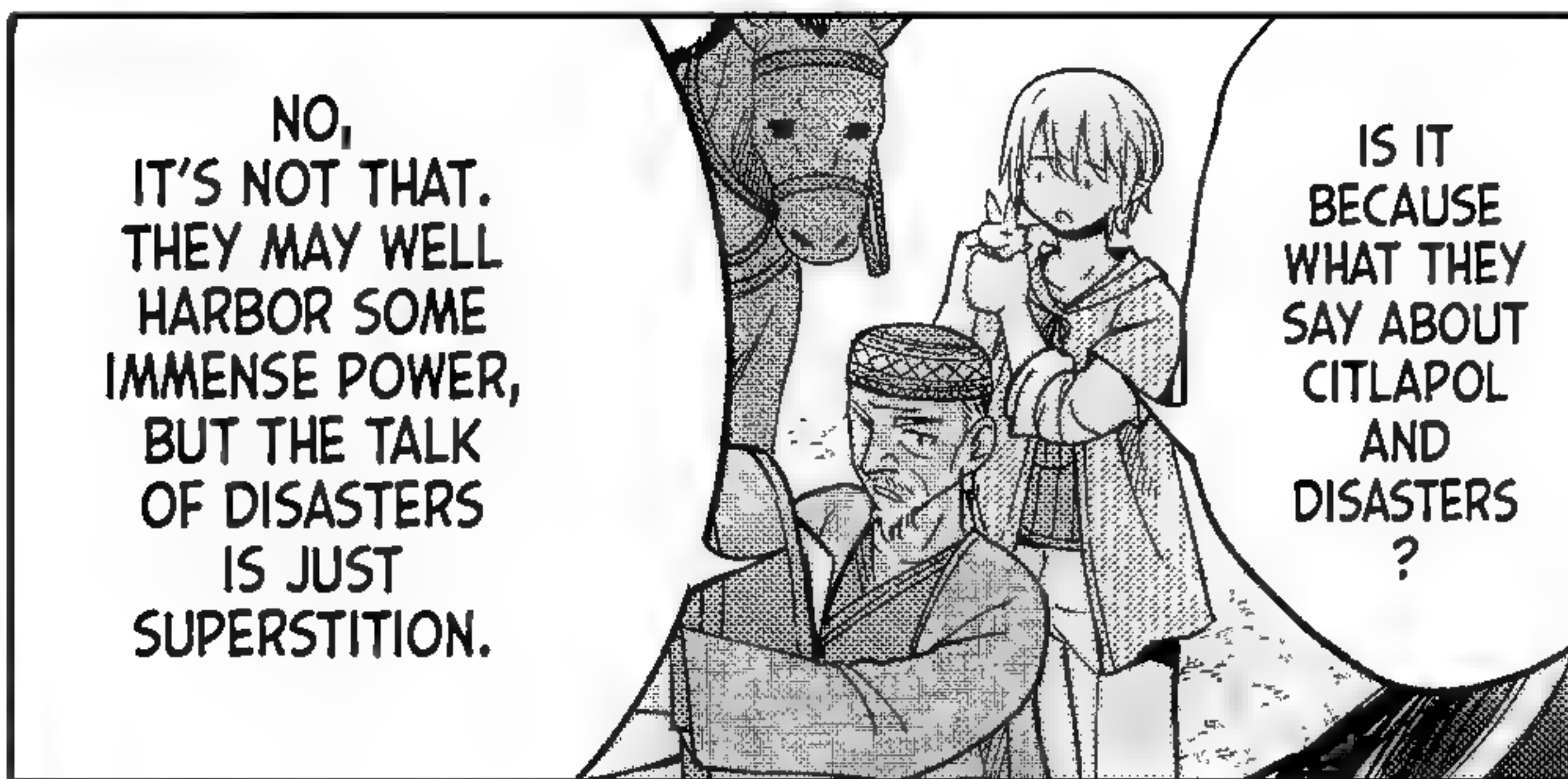
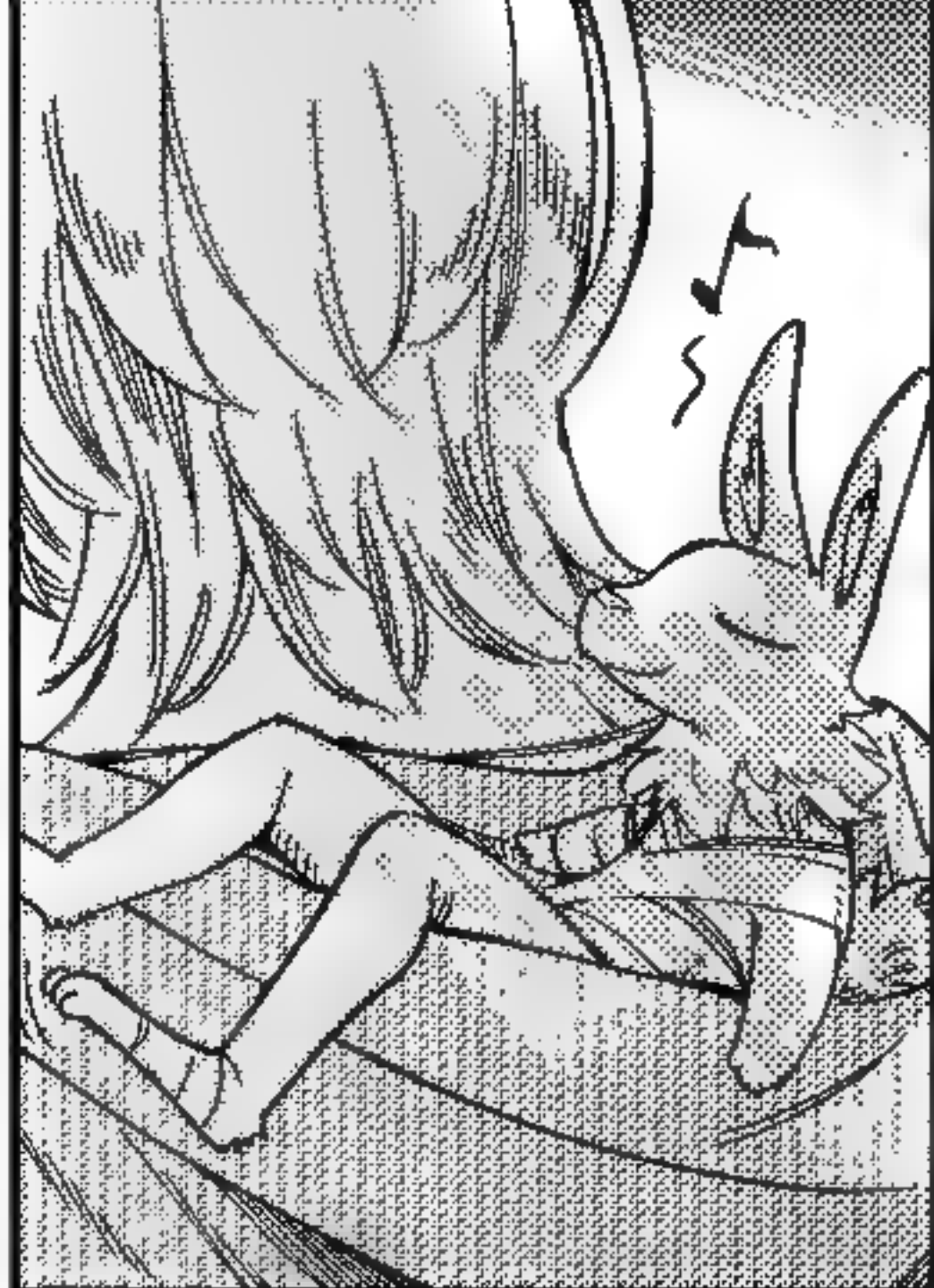
*Guess I  
shouldn't  
bother  
her.*

WHAT  
WAS  
THAT  
ABOUT  
?

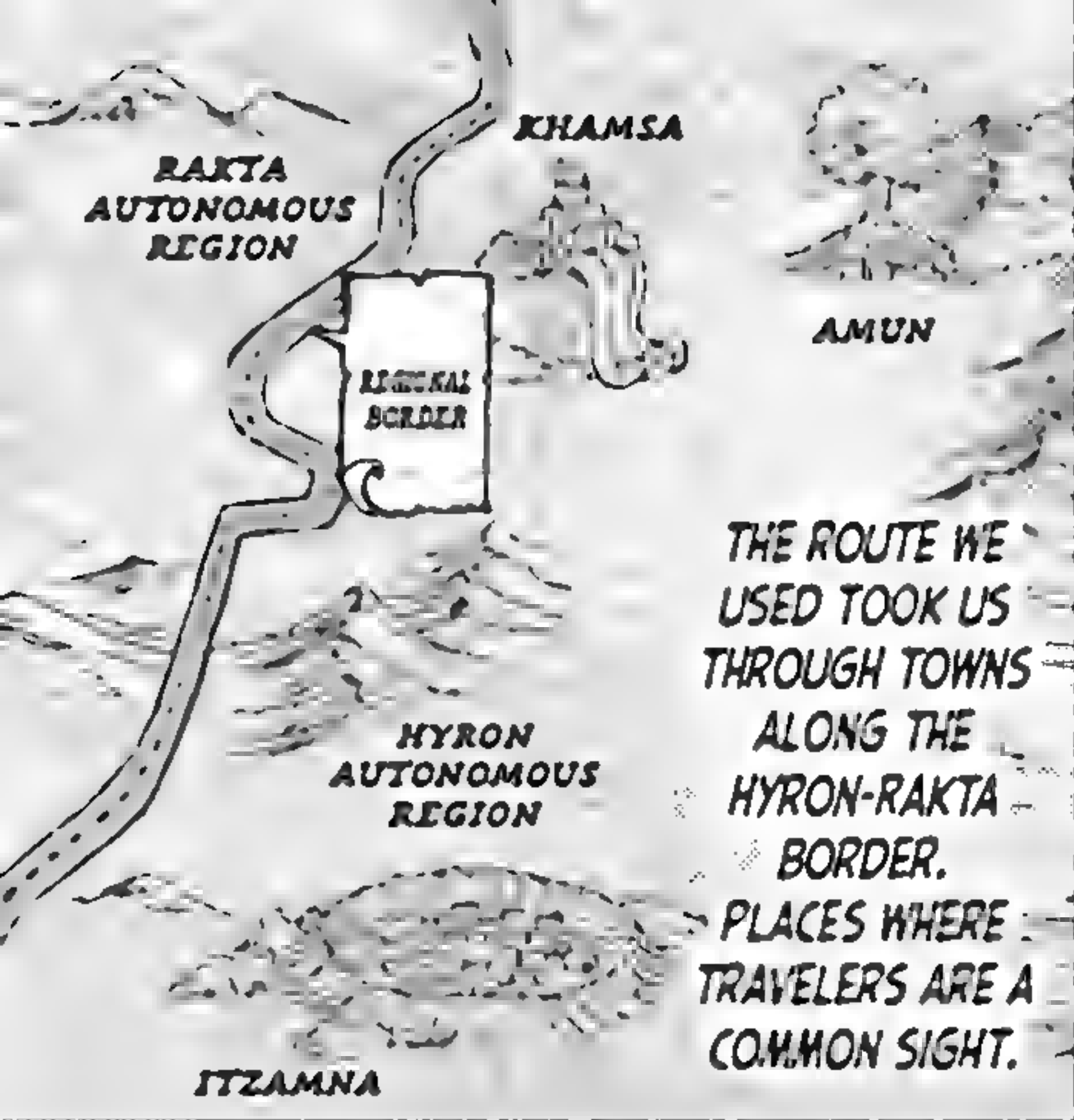
*Man, am I  
nervous!*

?!









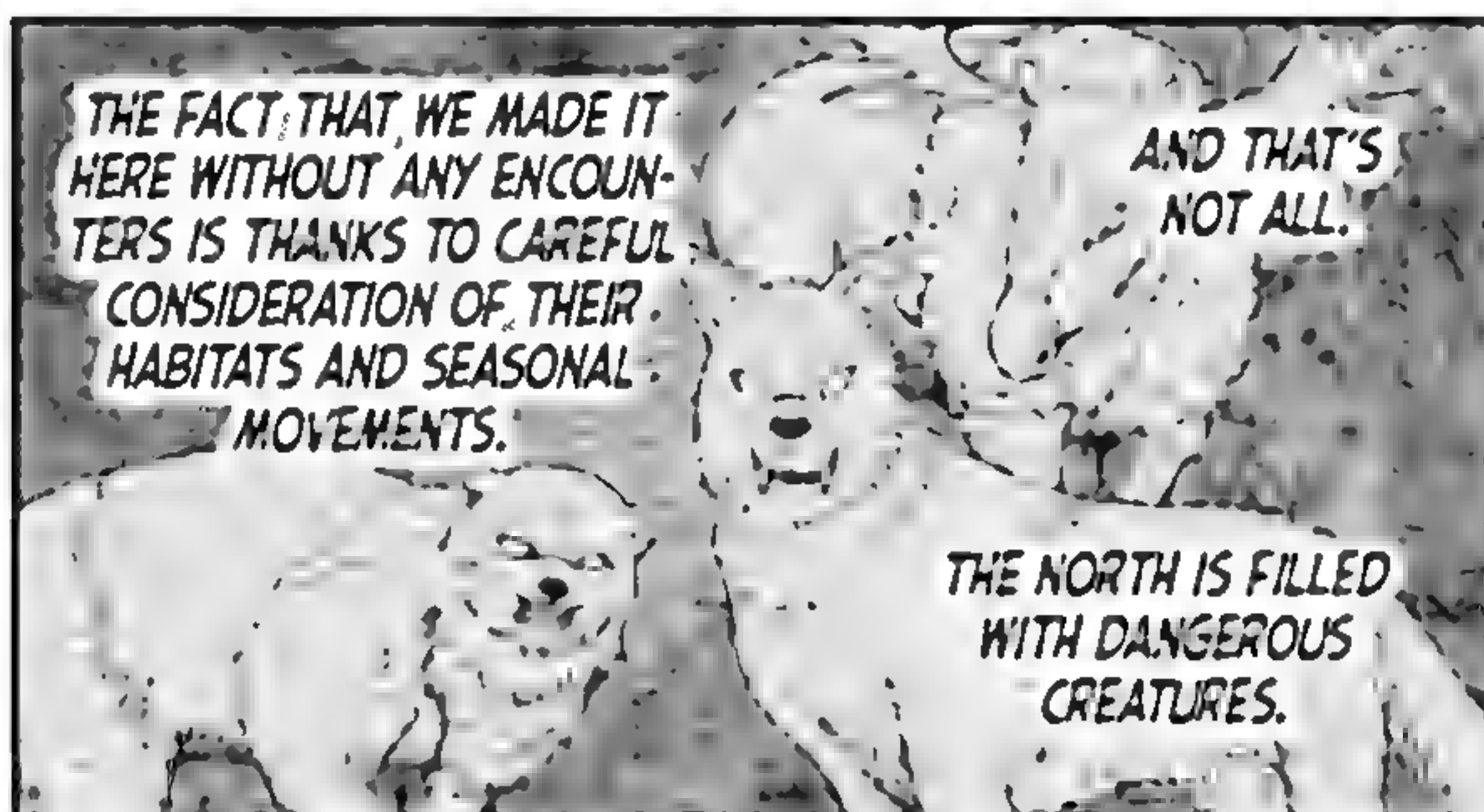
THE ROUTE WE USED TOOK US THROUGH TOWNS ALONG THE HYRON-RAKTA BORDER. PLACES WHERE TRAVELERS ARE A COMMON SIGHT.



HE'S THE WHOLE REASON I WAS ABLE TO MAKE THIS JOURNEY SAFELY.

...BUT I SHOULDN'T IGNORE MASTER GANAN'S INSTINCTS.

UIRA'S IMPORTANT TO ME ...



THE FACT THAT WE MADE IT HERE WITHOUT ANY ENCOUNTERS IS THANKS TO CAREFUL CONSIDERATION OF THEIR HABITATS AND SEASONAL MOVEMENTS.

AND THAT'S NOT ALL.

THE NORTH IS FILLED WITH DANGEROUS CREATURES.



...TOUCHED A DROP OF LIQUOR THIS ENTIRE JOURNEY.

Prere! This's a load off.

AND MASTER GANAN HASN'T...



IF WE'D PASSED THROUGH INSULAR TOWNS, WHERE PEOPLE ARE MORE WARY OF FOREIGNERS, I MIGHT NOT HAVE MADE IT HERE UNHARMED.

I'VE HEARD THAT IN THE HYRON CAPITAL, THEY EVEN DESIGNATE SEPARATE EATING AREAS FOR FOREIGNERS.



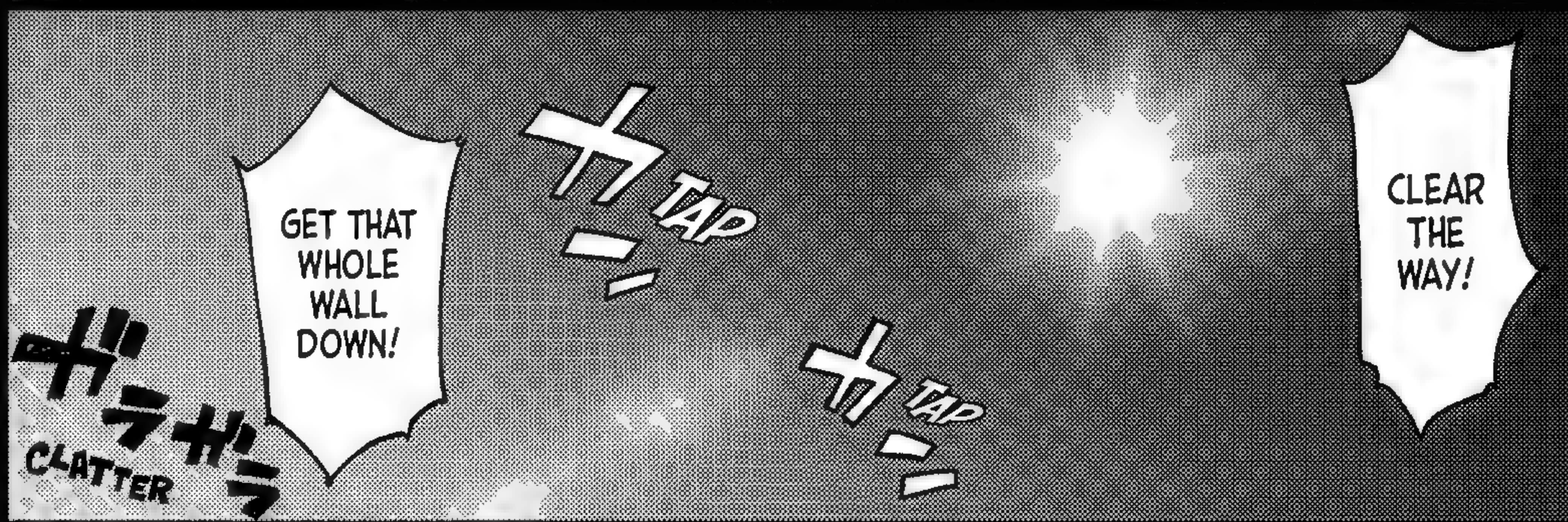
MY, OH, MY. WITH THE EXAM CREEPING UP...

...I CAN'T HELP BUT REMEMBER THE DAY YOU FIRST SHOWED UP.

The man's name was Ganan Kyassit.

He ran Ganan Masonry—Theo's place of employment.









OH, NO.  
IT'S NO  
TROUBLE.

AH!  
TEHICHI!

SORRY 'BOUT  
ALL THE  
NOISE.

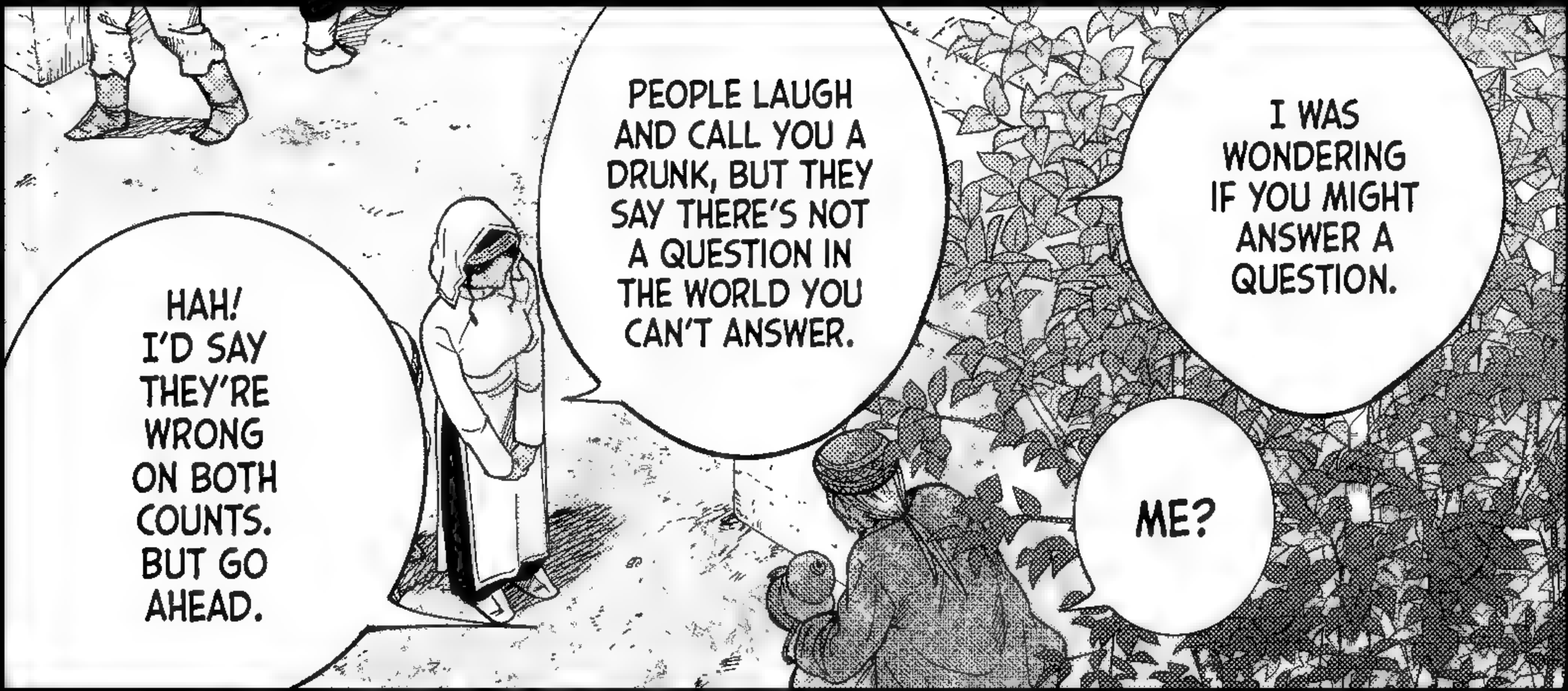
HM?

EXCUSE  
ME...

MISTER  
KYASSIT  
?

AND I  
DESIGNED  
THE  
BUILDING  
IN THE  
FIRST  
PLACE.

いん  
の!!



HAH!  
I'D SAY  
THEY'RE  
WRONG  
ON BOTH  
COUNTS.  
BUT GO  
AHEAD.

PEOPLE LAUGH  
AND CALL YOU A  
DRUNK, BUT THEY  
SAY THERE'S NOT  
A QUESTION IN  
THE WORLD YOU  
CAN'T ANSWER.

I WAS  
WONDERING  
IF YOU MIGHT  
ANSWER A  
QUESTION.

ME?

YOU TREK OUT  
TO THE CITY AND  
TAKE THE EXAM.  
THEY HOLD IT  
ONCE A YEAR.

BECOMIN'  
A KAFNA  
?

IT'S  
ABOUT  
THE  
KAFNA.

OH, NO. IT'S  
NOT FOR MY  
DAUGHTER...

HAHAHA!  
IS LITTLE  
CHITOL  
GOIN' ON  
ABOUT IT  
ALREADY?

Ah,  
you  
poor  
thing!

HOW  
EXACTLY  
DOES  
ONE GO  
ABOUT...  
PURSUING  
THAT PATH?





H-HELLO.

THIS  
LITTLE BOY  
IS THE  
ONE WHO  
WANTS TO  
KNOW.



He  
reeks of  
alcohol  
....!

HEARD  
YOU'RE  
QUITE  
THE  
HERO.

HEY!  
YOU'RE  
THE  
LONG-  
EARED  
KID!



**AH,  
HAH,  
HAH,  
HAH  
!!**

I  
SEE.  
AND  
NOW  
YOU  
WANNA  
BE A-

YOU'VE  
GOT GUTS,  
RUNNING  
INTO A  
FIRE TO  
SAVE  
SOMEONE  
LIKE  
THAT.

OSSEI'S  
BEEN  
PRAISIN'  
YOU UP  
AND  
DOWN.



...A  
KAFNA  
?!





P-  
PLEASE.  
ISN'T  
THAT  
A BIT  
HARSH  
?



WAY  
TO GO!  
NAUGHT  
FOR  
THREE  
ALREADY!

THAT'S  
A JOB FOR  
GIRLS WITH  
MONEY WHO  
LIVE IN THE  
CITY!



IF YOU ASK ME,  
A VENTURE AIN'T  
GRAND ENOUGH  
UNLESS SOMEONE  
OUT THERE IS  
LAUGHING  
AT YOU!

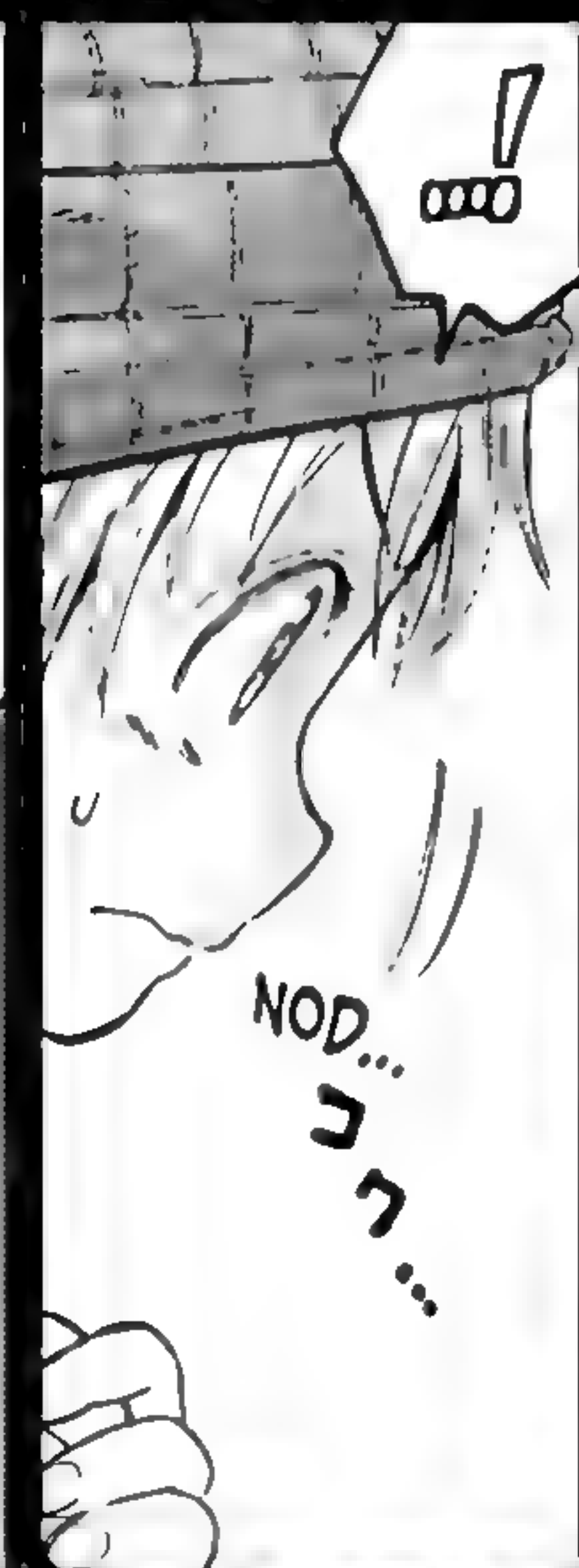
IF  
YOU HEAR  
PEOPLE  
JEERING,  
YOU CAN TAKE  
IT AS A SIGN  
THAT YOU'RE  
STARTING  
SOMETHING  
BIG.

NOTHIN'  
HARSH  
ABOUT  
IT!



AIN'T  
NEVER  
GONNA  
HAPPEN.

THAT'S  
WHAT ANY  
UPSTANDING  
ADULT WOULD  
TELL YOU.



NOD...  
コッ...



...YOU  
SERIOUS  
ABOUT  
IT?



...HUH?



SO THE  
LONG-  
EARS  
WANTS  
TO BE A  
KAFNA,  
HUH?

HAH/  
WELL,  
I'LL  
BE.





IF  
THOSE'RE  
THE WORDS  
GOING  
THROUGH  
YOUR HEAD,  
THEN FOLLOW  
ME.

"FORGET  
YOU!  
I'LL FIND  
A WAY!"



BUT  
YOU CAN  
PROBABLY  
TELL I'M  
ANYTHING  
BUT.

\*HIC\*



WHAT  
DO  
THEY  
CALL  
YOU?  
"LONG-  
EARS"  
?

HUH?  
YOU'RE  
THAT  
TWERP  
FROM  
TOWN.

FOREMAN AT GANAN MASONRY  
**DAEM YAPPAN**



THIS  
SOME  
KINDA  
JOKE  
?!



HE'S  
GONNA  
BE  
WORKING  
HERE.  
STARTIN'  
TODAY.



DRINK THE DAY  
AWAY, BOSS,  
BUT DON'T  
FILL MY JOB  
SITES WITH  
DEAD WEIGHT.

IF  
HE TRIES  
TO SWING  
A HOE,  
IT'S GONNA  
SNAP HIM  
RIGHT IN  
HALF!

WHAT AM  
I GONNA  
DO WITH A  
SCRAWNY  
RUNT LIKE  
YOU?

TAKE  
ANOTHER  
LOOK.  
THIS ONE'S  
GOT GUTS.

GRUNT

GRUNT

CLENCH...

...

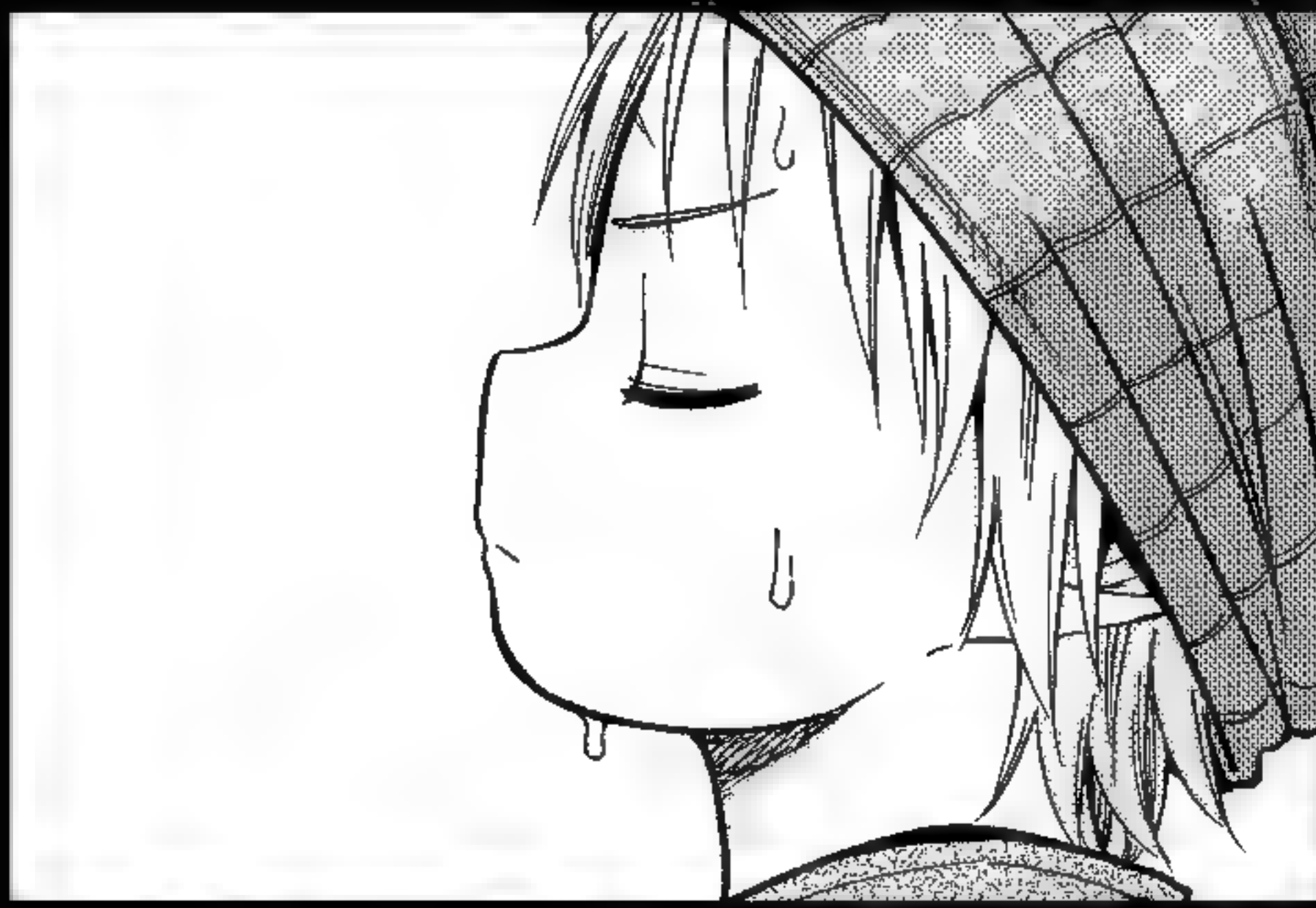
GUTS?!  
HE'S  
BEEN  
STAND-  
ING...

...THERE  
TREMBLING  
THIS WHOLE  
TIME.  
AIN'T  
MADE A  
PEEP!

I  
HAVE A  
NAME.  
IT'S  
THEO  
FUMIS!

IT'S  
NOT  
"LONG-  
EARS"  
!





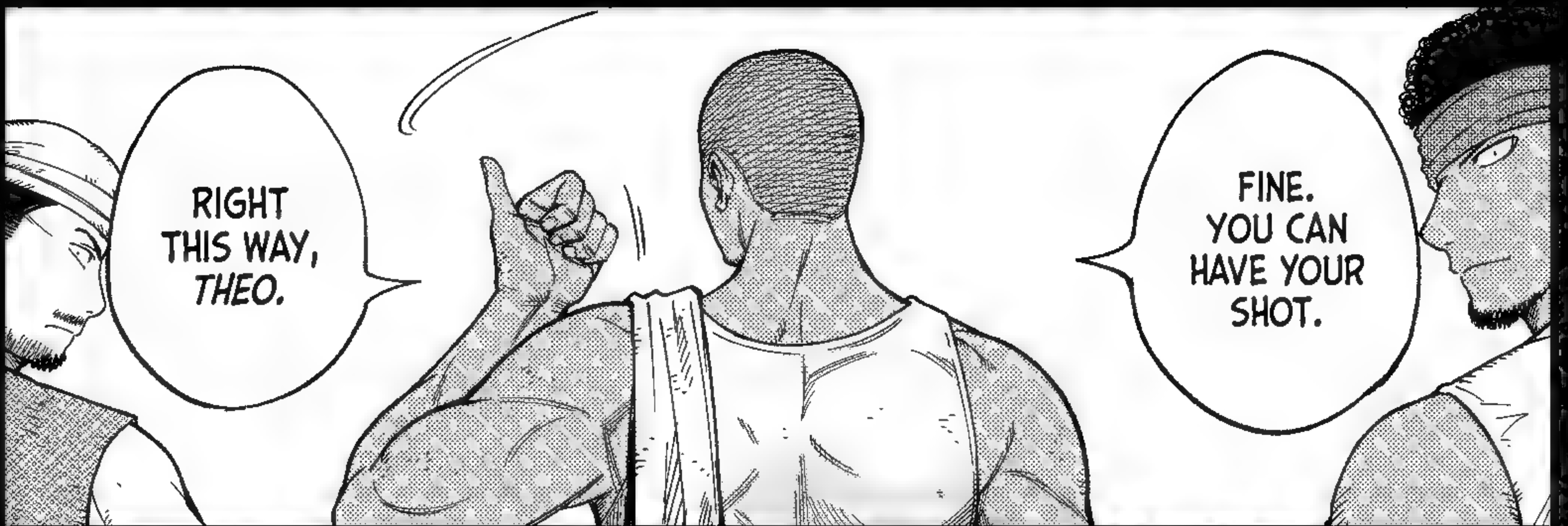
AND  
ANOTHER  
THING!



HMPH.

...

YOU WON'T  
KNOW FOR  
SURE IF IT'LL  
SNAP ME IN  
TWO UNLESS  
YOU LET ME  
TRY!!



RIGHT  
THIS WAY,  
THEO.

FINE.  
YOU CAN  
HAVE YOUR  
SHOT.



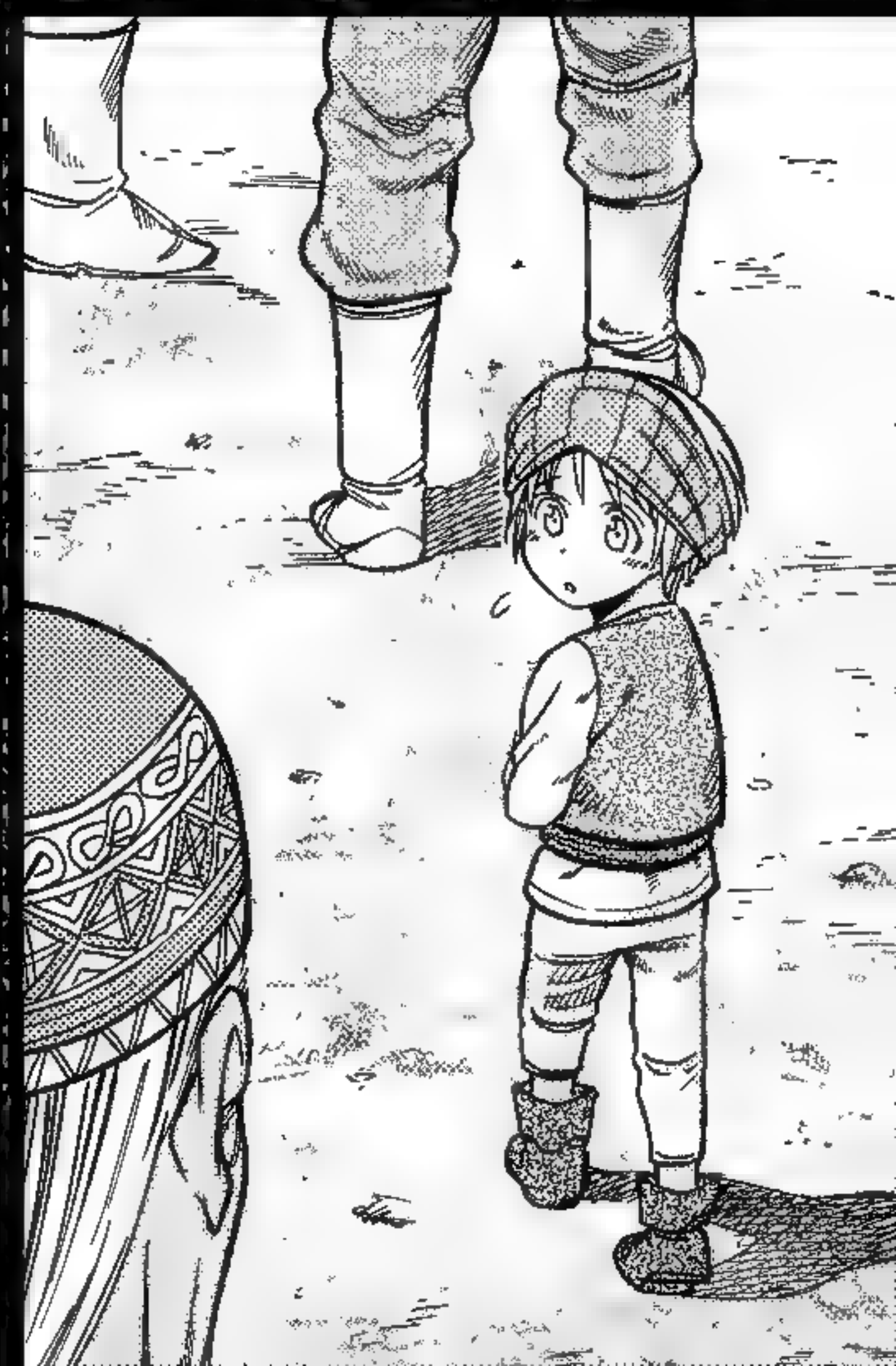
A  
KAFNA,  
HM?

HAH!

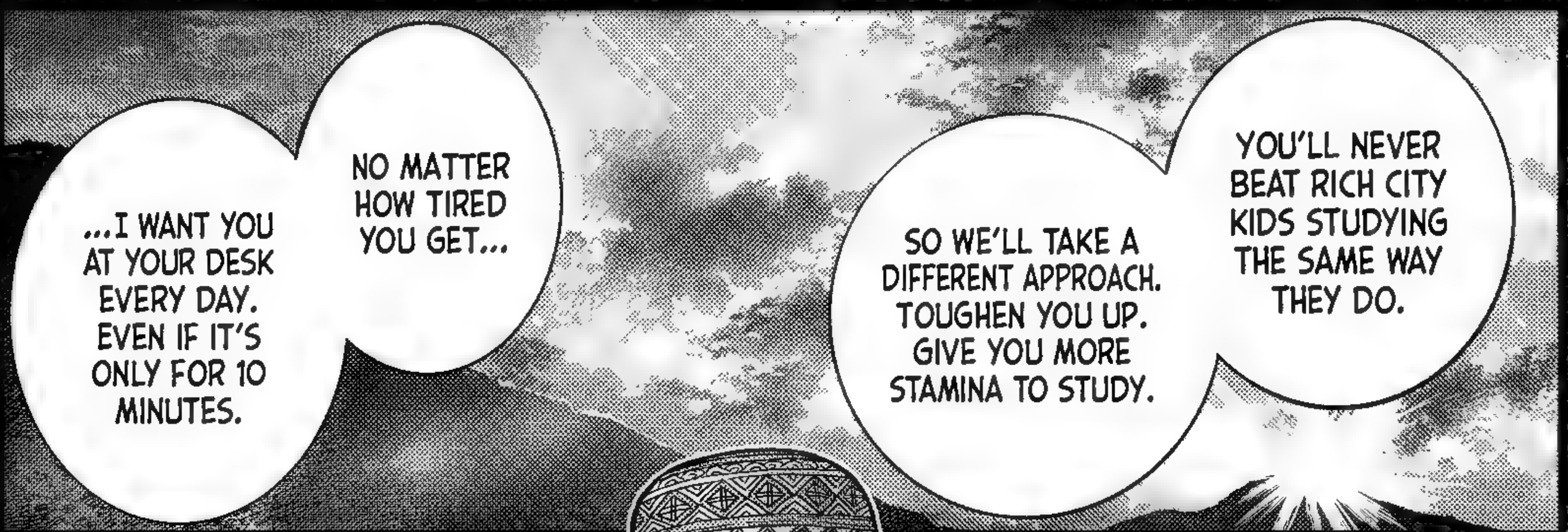
HOW  
ABSURD.



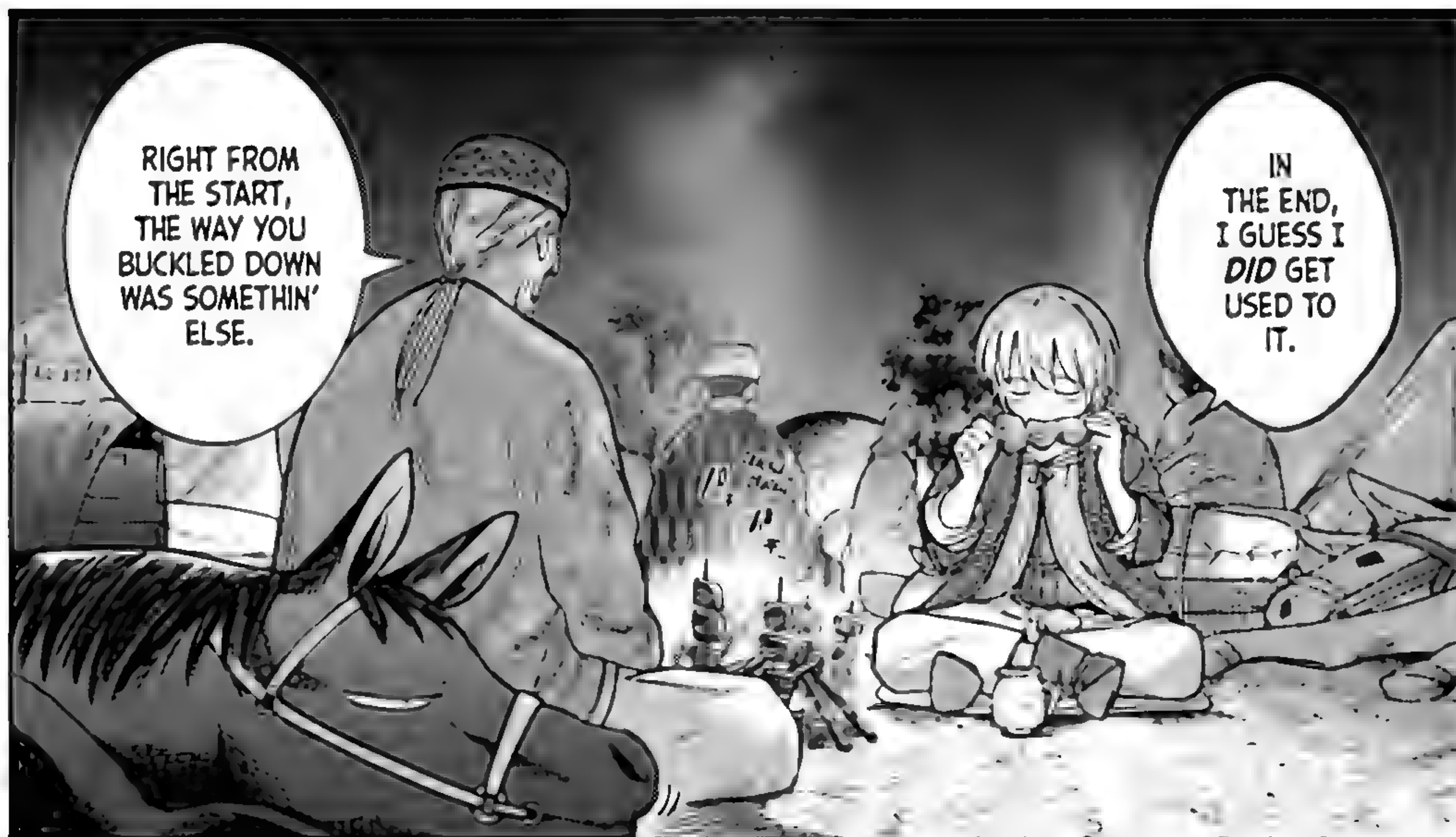
SHOO  
SHOO  
SHOO











RIGHT FROM  
THE START,  
THE WAY YOU  
BUCKLED DOWN  
WAS SOMETHIN'  
ELSE.

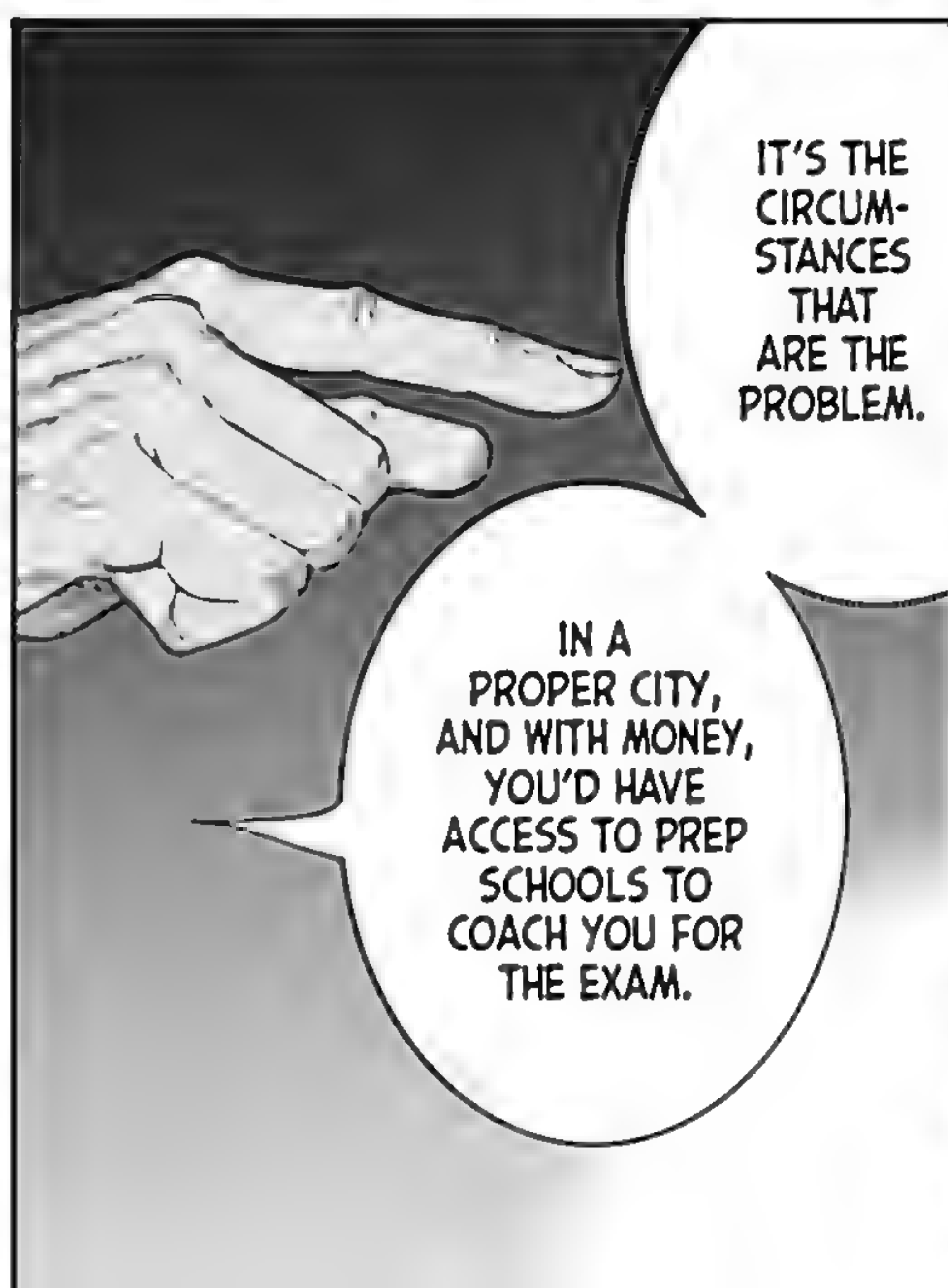
IN  
THE END,  
I GUESS I  
*DID* GET  
USED TO  
IT.



THAT AIN'T  
NO SMALL  
ACCOMPLISH-  
MENT.

EVERY DAY,  
WITHOUT FAIL,  
FOR SEVEN  
YEARS.

SCHOOL  
IN THE  
MORNING.  
HARD LABOR  
'TIL DUSK.  
STUDY AT  
NIGHT.



IT'S THE CIRCUM-  
STANCES  
THAT  
ARE THE  
PROBLEM.

IN A  
PROPER CITY,  
AND WITH MONEY,  
YOU'D HAVE  
ACCESS TO PREP  
SCHOOLS TO  
COACH YOU FOR  
THE EXAM.



THAT  
LOW,  
HUH?

I THOUGHT  
I WORKED  
PRETTY TO  
PREPARE.



STILL...  
I WOULDN'T  
PUT YOUR  
CHANCES  
MUCH HIGHER  
THAN ONE IN  
THREE.

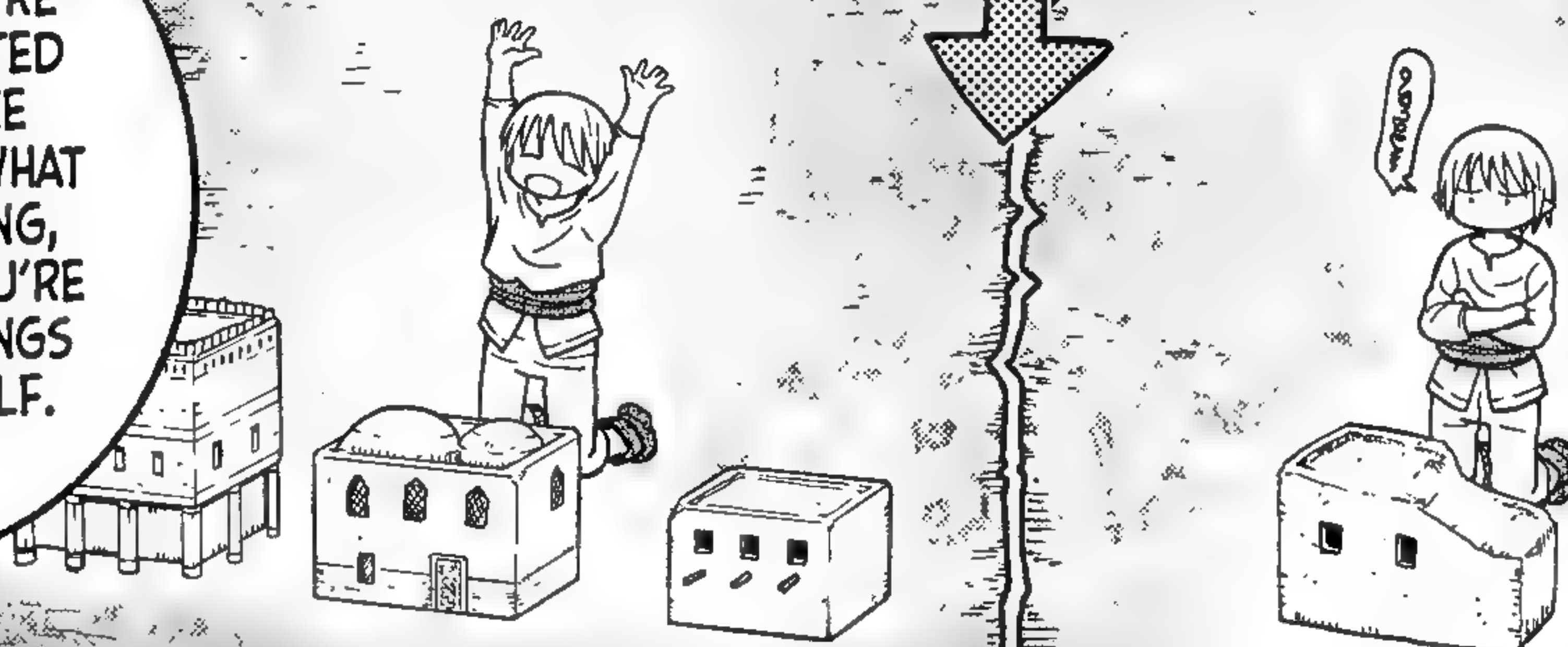


GIVEN THE SAME  
AMOUNT OF TIME  
AND LABOR,  
THERE'S A BIG  
GAP BETWEEN  
WHAT YOU CAN  
ACCOMPLISH...



IT'S NO  
DIFFERENT  
FROM WHEN  
YOU'RE  
BUILDING  
HOUSES  
WITH ME.

...WHEN YOU'RE  
BEING DIRECTED  
BY SOMEONE  
WHO KNOWS WHAT  
THEY'RE DOING,  
AND WHEN YOU'RE  
FIGURING THINGS  
OUT YOURSELF.



BUT THE  
TRUTH IS,  
THE SAME  
AMOUNT OF  
EFFORT DOESN'T  
ALWAYS YIELD  
THE SAME  
RESULTS.

I WISH I  
COULD TELL  
YOU THAT HARD  
WORK'S ENOUGH  
TO MAKE DREAMS  
COME TRUE.

...THE  
PLACE  
YOU'RE  
RAISED...

...THE  
MONEY  
YOUR  
PARENTS  
HAVE...

...AND  
THE WAY  
YOU  
LOOK.

む  
む  
む GRK...

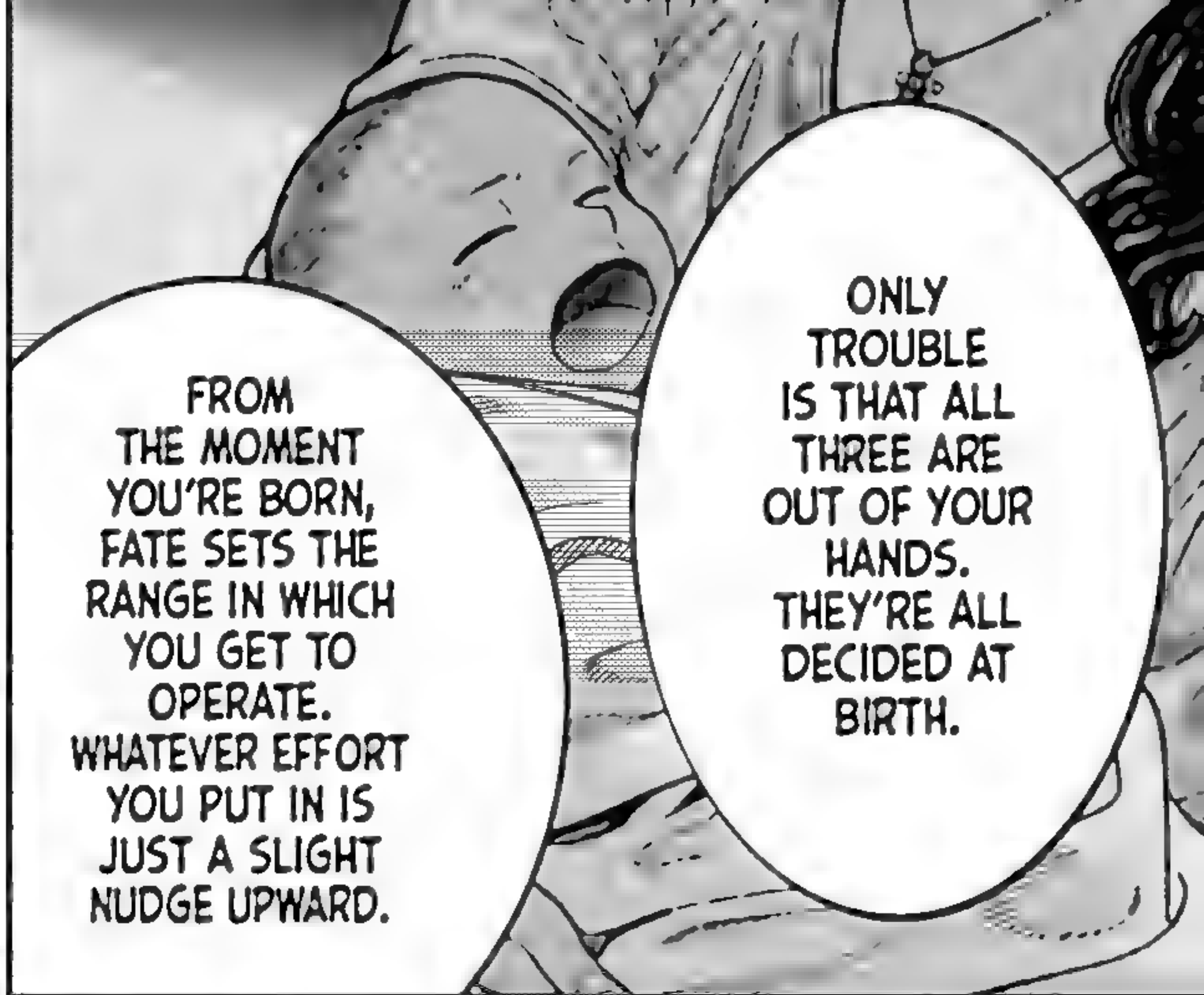
WHETHER A  
MAN OR WOMAN  
SUCCEEDS IN LIFE  
COMES DOWN TO  
THREE THINGS...





IT'S  
ROUGH,  
BUT  
THAT'S  
LIFE.

IF  
LIFE'S  
A RACE,  
YOU  
STARTED  
WAY OUT  
IN BACK.



FROM  
THE MOMENT  
YOU'RE BORN,  
FATE SETS THE  
RANGE IN WHICH  
YOU GET TO  
OPERATE.  
WHATEVER EFFORT  
YOU PUT IN IS  
JUST A SLIGHT  
NUDGE UPWARD.

ONLY  
TROUBLE  
IS THAT ALL  
THREE ARE  
OUT OF YOUR  
HANDS.  
THEY'RE ALL  
DECIDED AT  
BIRTH.



...AND  
YOU'RE  
STARTING  
OUT  
DEAD  
LAST.

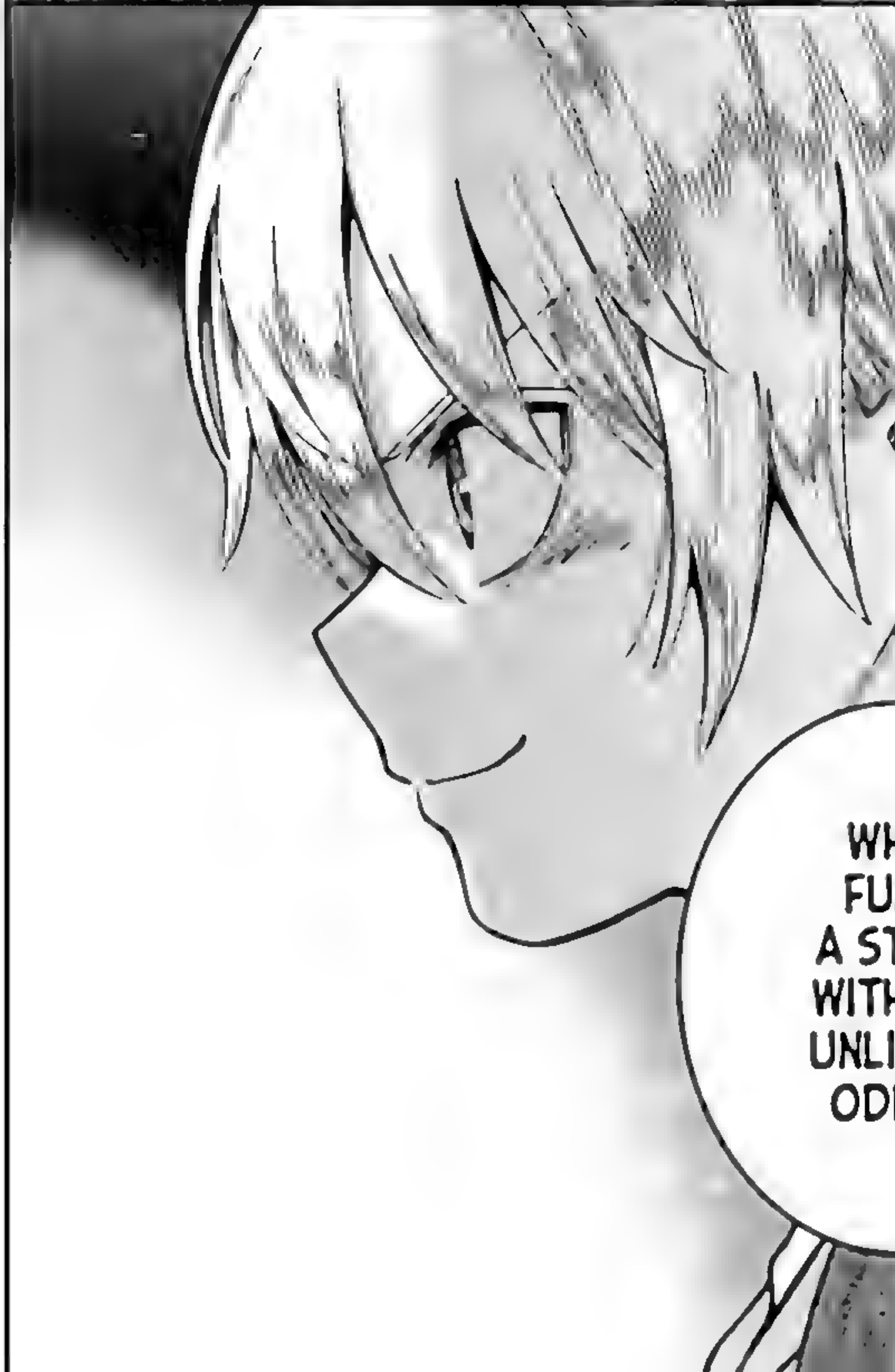
HEH. THE  
RACE IS  
ALREADY  
ON...



YOU LOST  
OUT ON ALL  
THREE COUNTS.  
A HALF-BLOOD  
BORN IN THE  
STICKS WITHOUT  
ANY MONEY.



BUT...

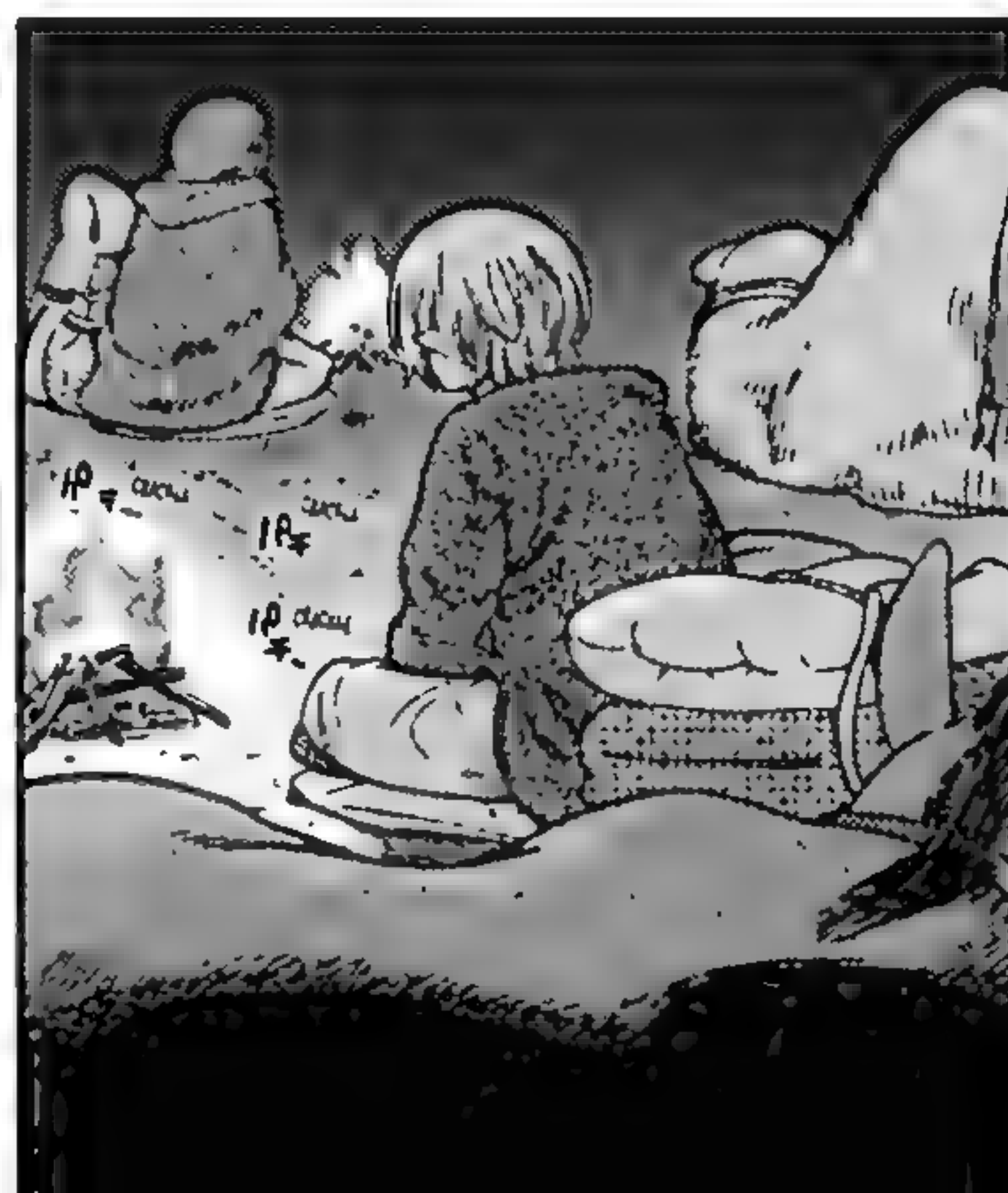
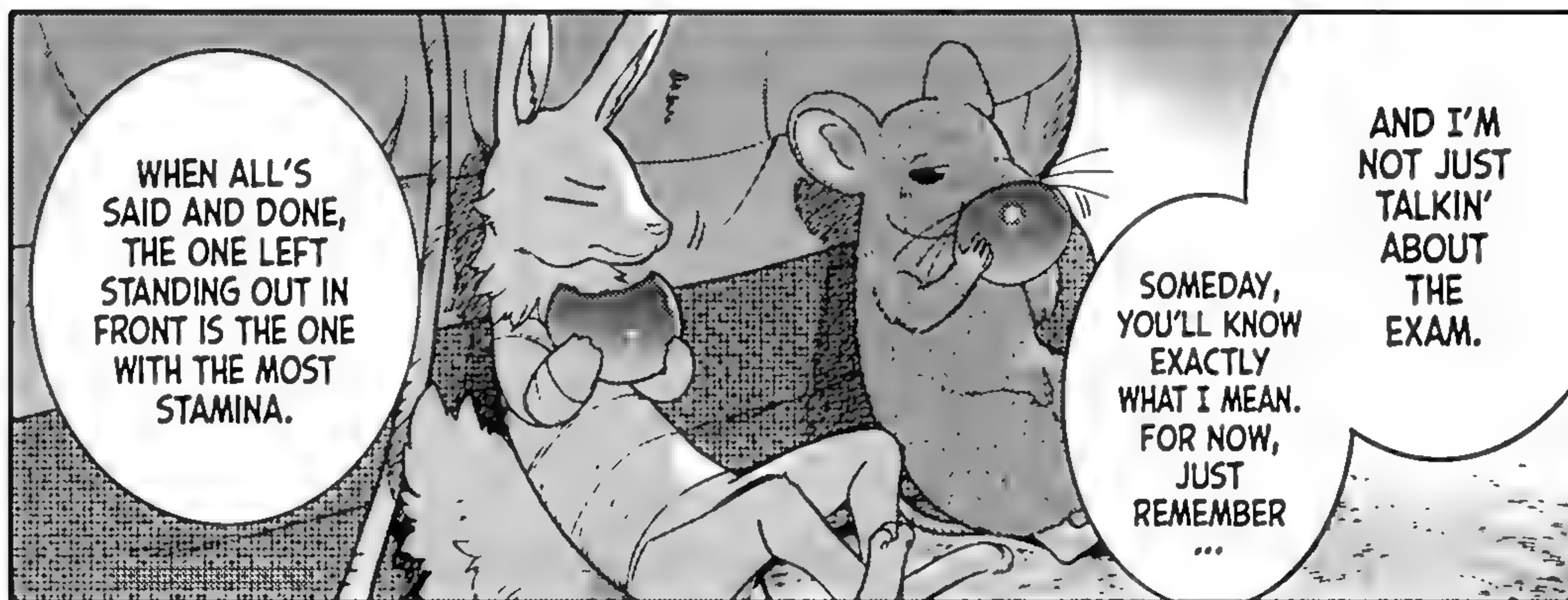
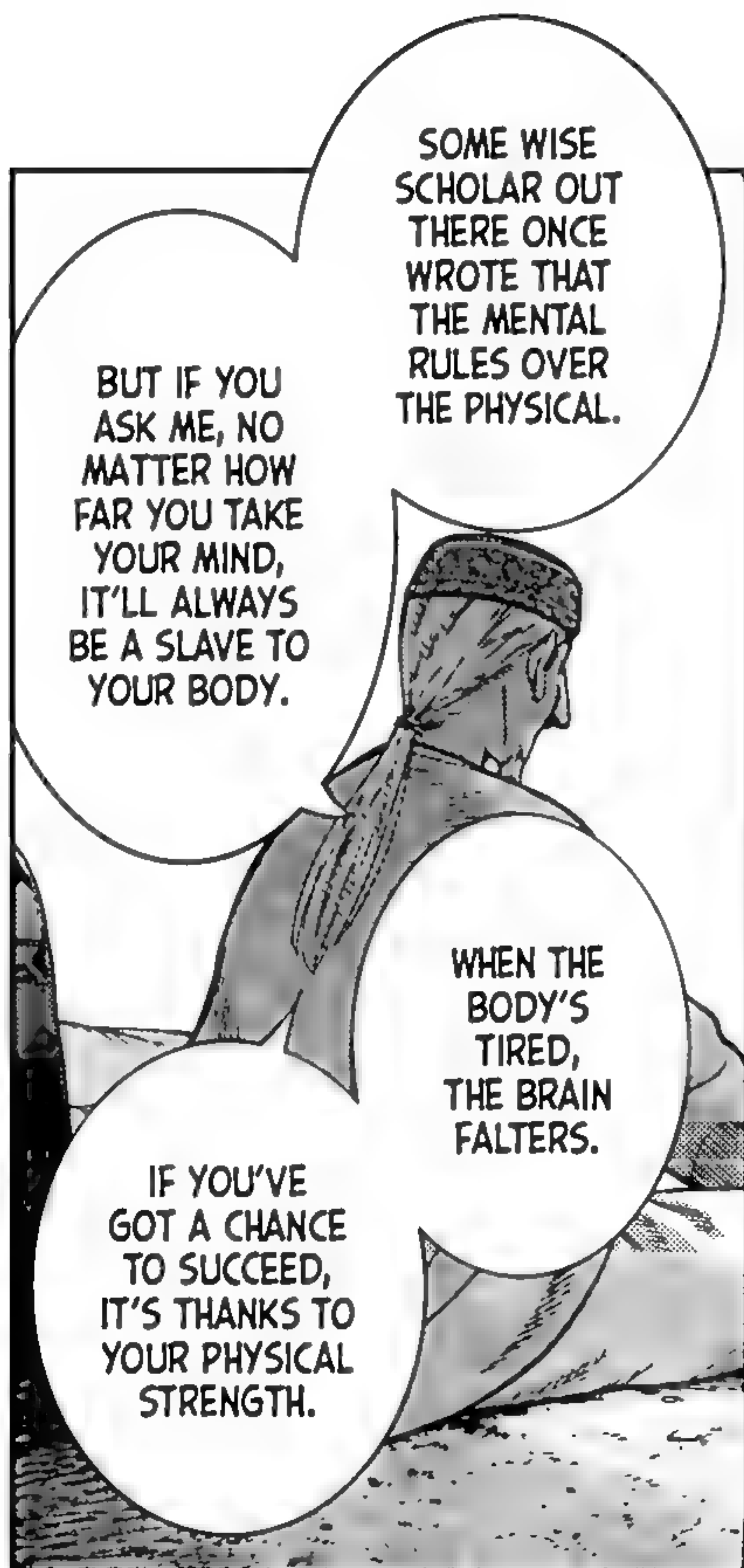


WHAT  
FUN'S  
A STORY  
WITHOUT  
UNLIKELY  
ODDS?



...PASSING  
EVERYONE ELSE  
TAKE THE LEAD  
IS A SWEETNESS  
THAT ONLY THOSE  
IN LAST PLACE  
EVER GET TO  
TASTE.







AND  
YOU'VE  
BEEN HERE  
TO TEACH ME  
ABOUT THE  
WORLD.

MY  
SISTER DID  
EVERYTHING  
SO I COULD  
GO TO  
SCHOOL.

I LOVE  
AMUN AND  
ALL THE  
PEOPLE  
THERE.

MOST  
IMPORTANT  
OF ALL,  
I'VE COME  
TO LOVE  
THE WAY  
I LOOK.

A HERO  
CAN'T  
AFFORD  
TO BLEND  
IN WITH  
THE  
CROWD.







A  
KAFNA,  
HUH  
...?

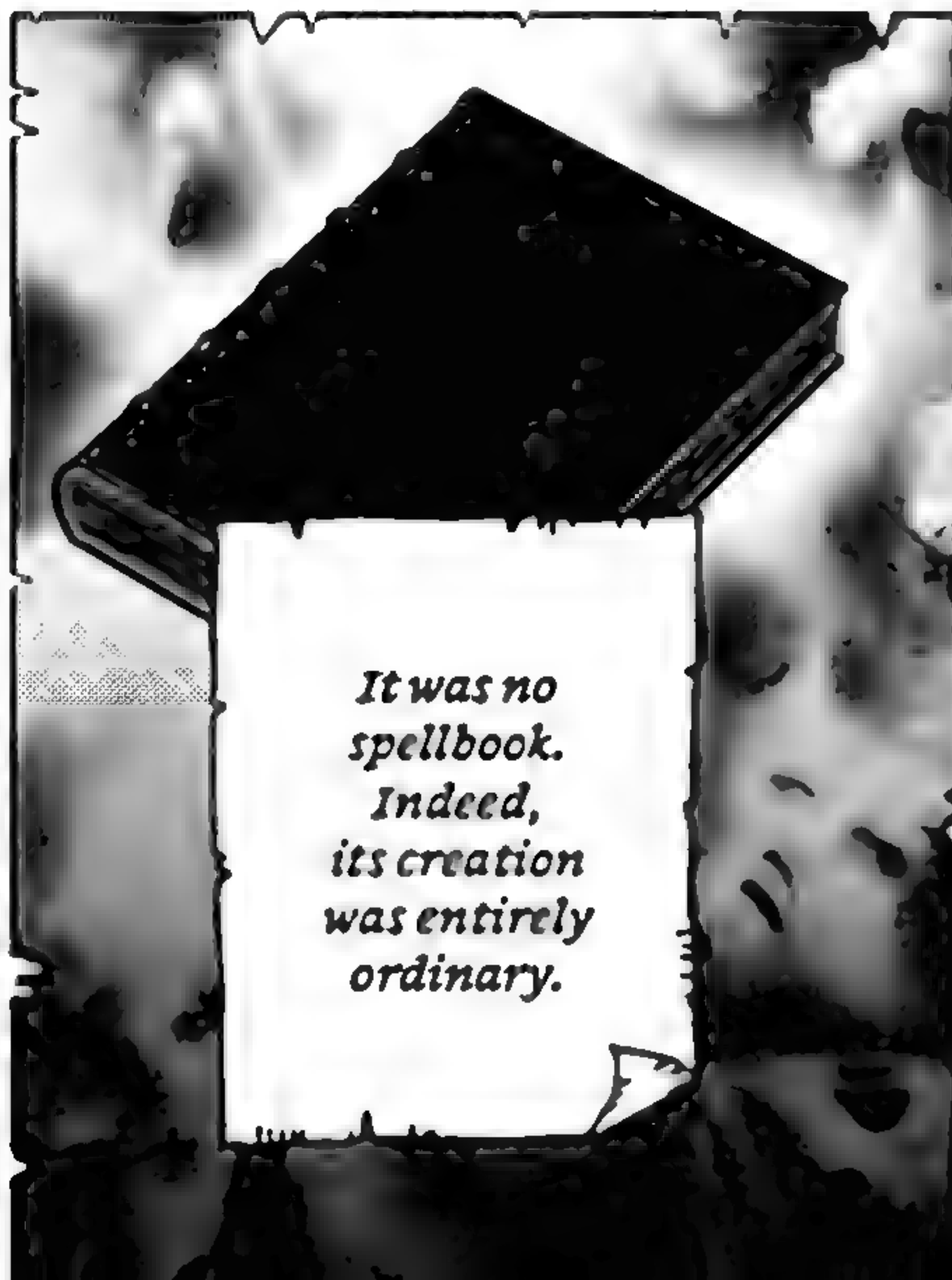
Once,  
there was a  
book on the  
continent  
known  
as the  
"The Black  
Text."



It was  
a plan to  
eradicate  
one of the  
races.

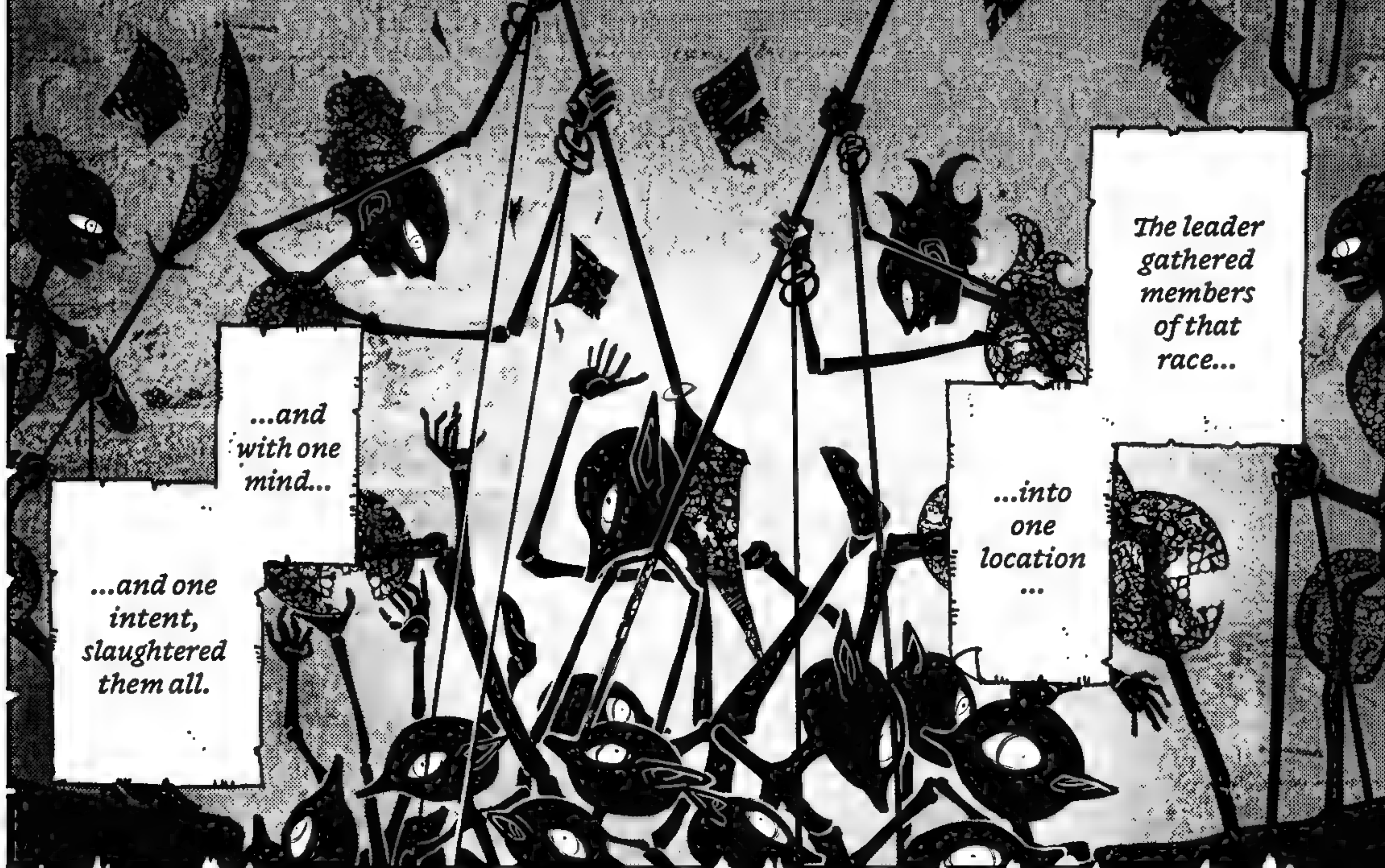
...urging  
a certain  
plan be  
carried  
out.

But  
during the  
war of the  
races, that  
text's words  
greatly  
swayed one  
leader...



It was no  
spellbook.  
Indeed,  
its creation  
was entirely  
ordinary.



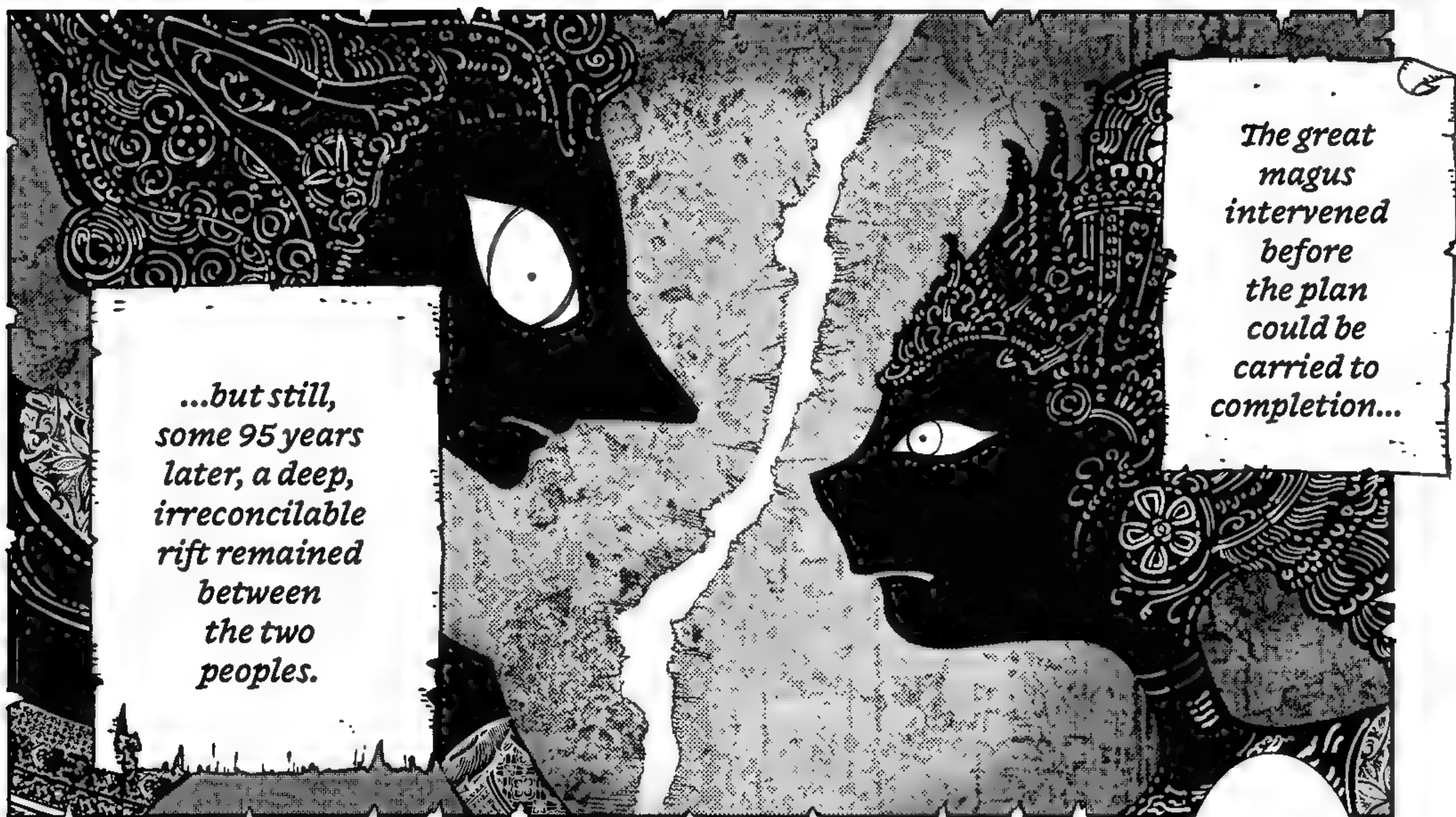


*...and one intent, slaughtered them all.*

*...and with one mind...*

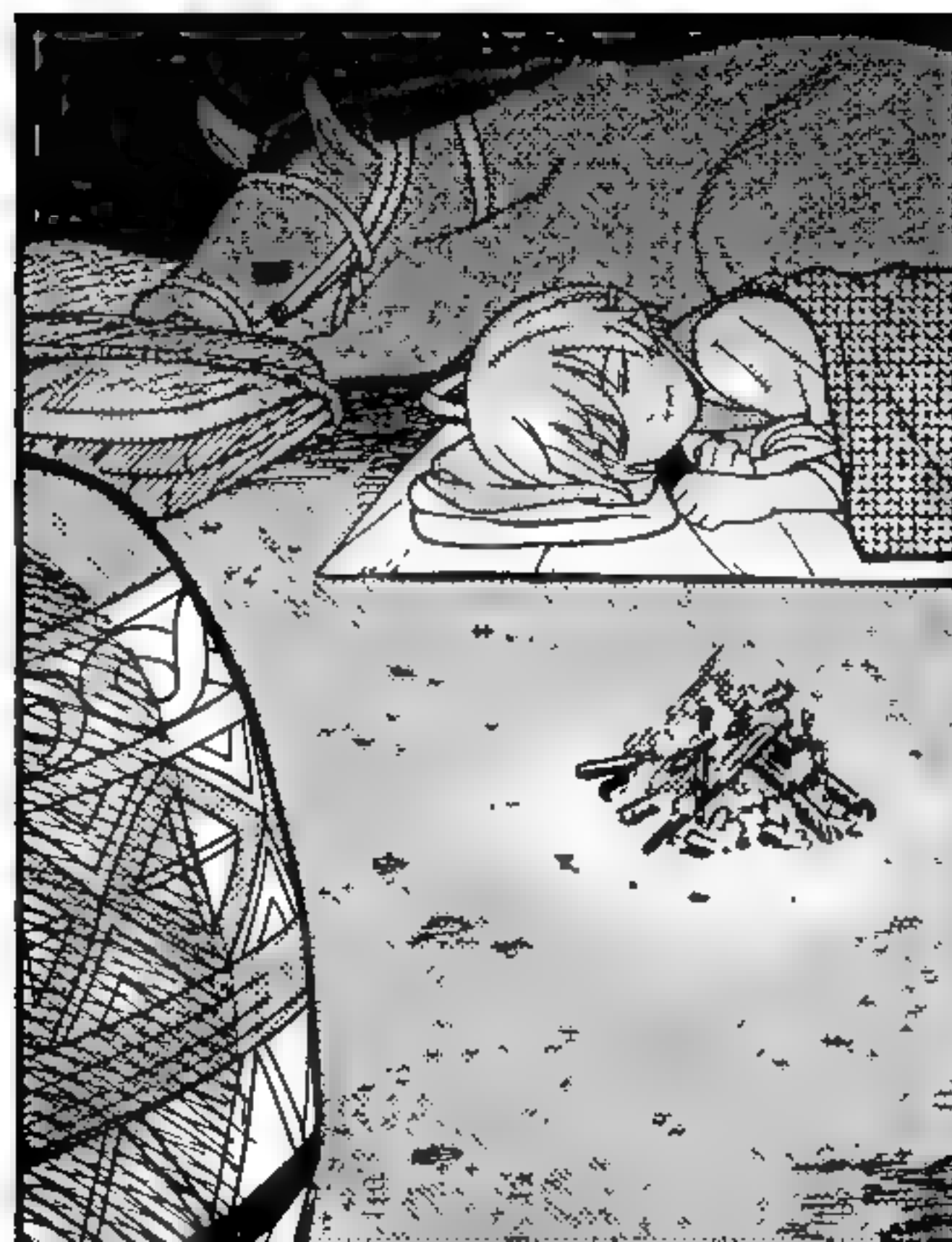
*...into one location ...*

*The leader gathered members of that race...*



*...but still, some 95 years later, a deep, irreconcilable rift remained between the two peoples.*

*The great magus intervened before the plan could be carried to completion...*



*THAT DARK EPISODE...*

*...IS ONE REASON THE LIBRARY HAS COME TO INSPECT AND MANAGE EVERY PUBLICATION ACROSS THE CONTINENT.*





AND NOW AT THE  
LIBRARY GATES...

...A CHILD  
PREPARES  
TO KNOCK...

...BORN HALF OF THE SLAIN,  
AND HALF THEIR KILLERS.



THAT IS...

...IF HE  
MANAGES TO  
BECOME ONE.



Heh.



WHO  
KNOWS WHAT  
WAVES THAT  
MIGHT SEND  
ACROSS THE  
CONTINENT.

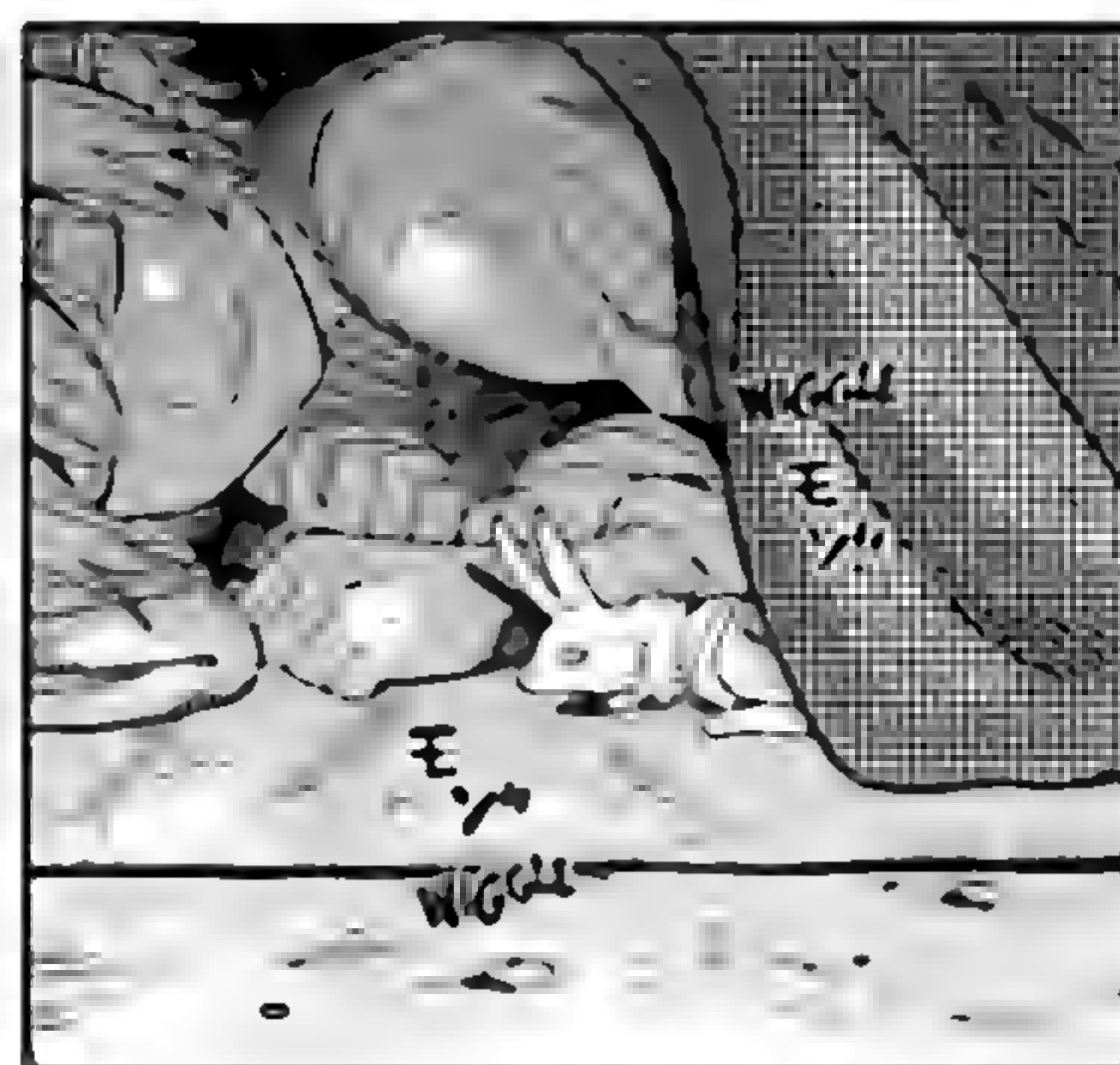
THEO  
AS A  
KAFNA...



WAVE...



!



WIGGLE  
E  
WIGGLE









اَفْزَاكْ  
Aftzaak  
City of Books



KRICH





THIS IS  
AFTZAAK...!



Morning on the day...

...of the Kafna Exam

I'M  
TRULY IN  
AFTZAAK.



WE CAME IN  
FROM THE  
NORTH.

CAMPGROUND

MAIN GATE,  
CENTRAL  
LIBRARY

DOWNTOWN

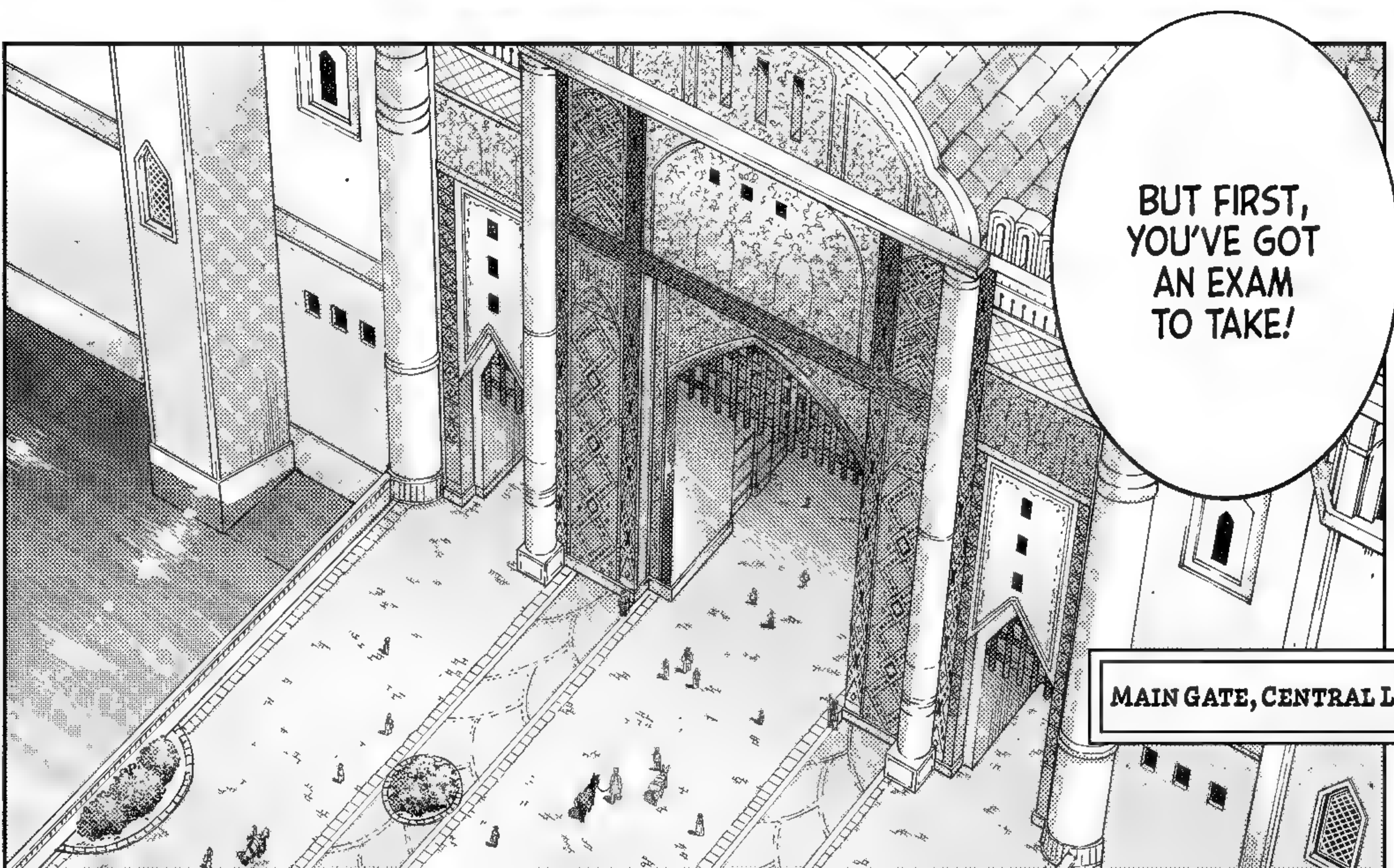
THE CITY OF  
BOOKS PROPER  
IS ALONG THE  
MAIN STREETS  
IN THE SOUTH.



FFFT  
PFFF

I'M  
BREATHING  
AFTZAAK  
AIR RIGHT  
NOW!!

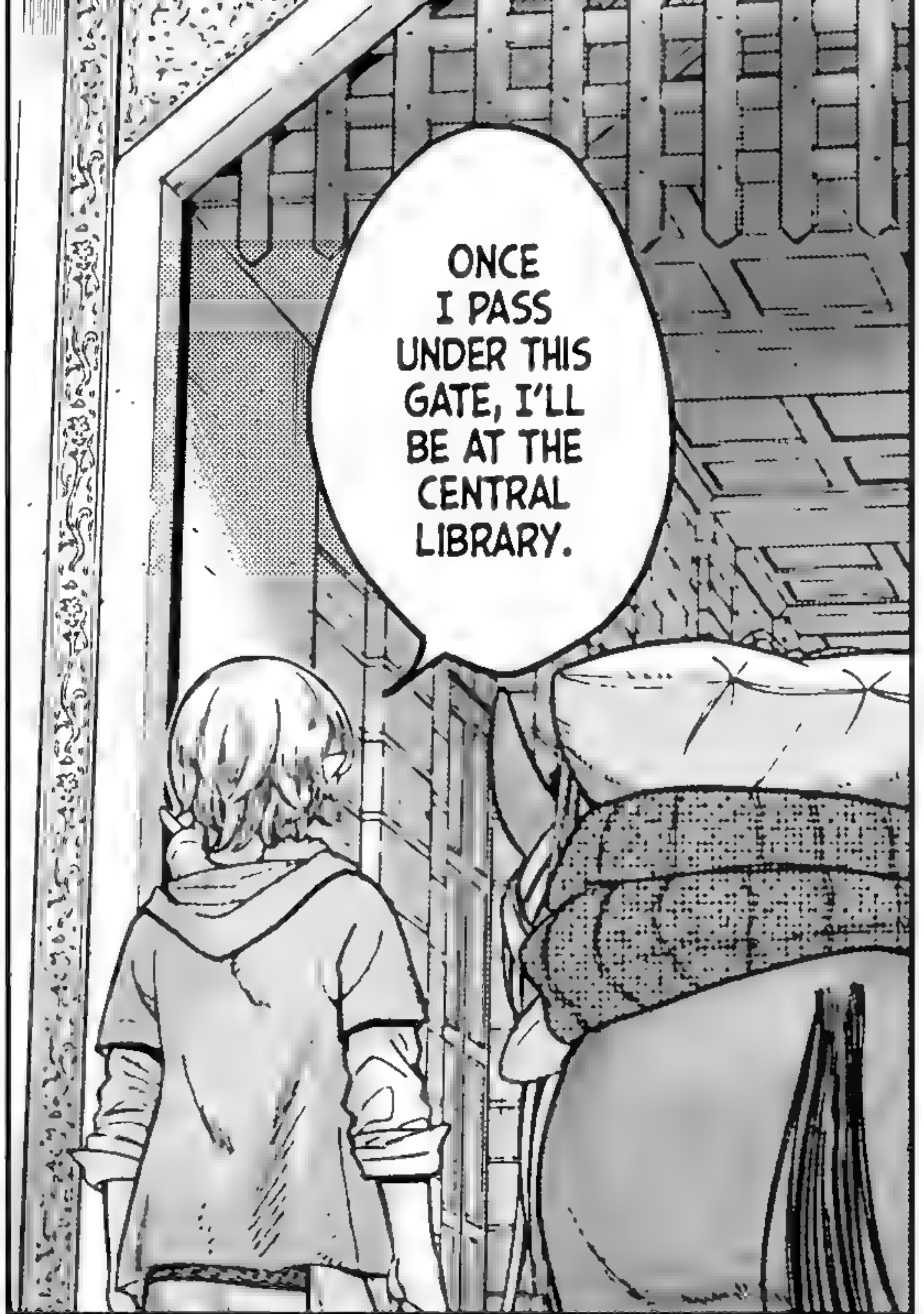
AND YOU'VE  
BEEN BREATHIN' IT  
SINCE LAST NIGHT.  
WE'RE STILL ONLY  
IN THE RESIDENTIAL  
DISTRICT.



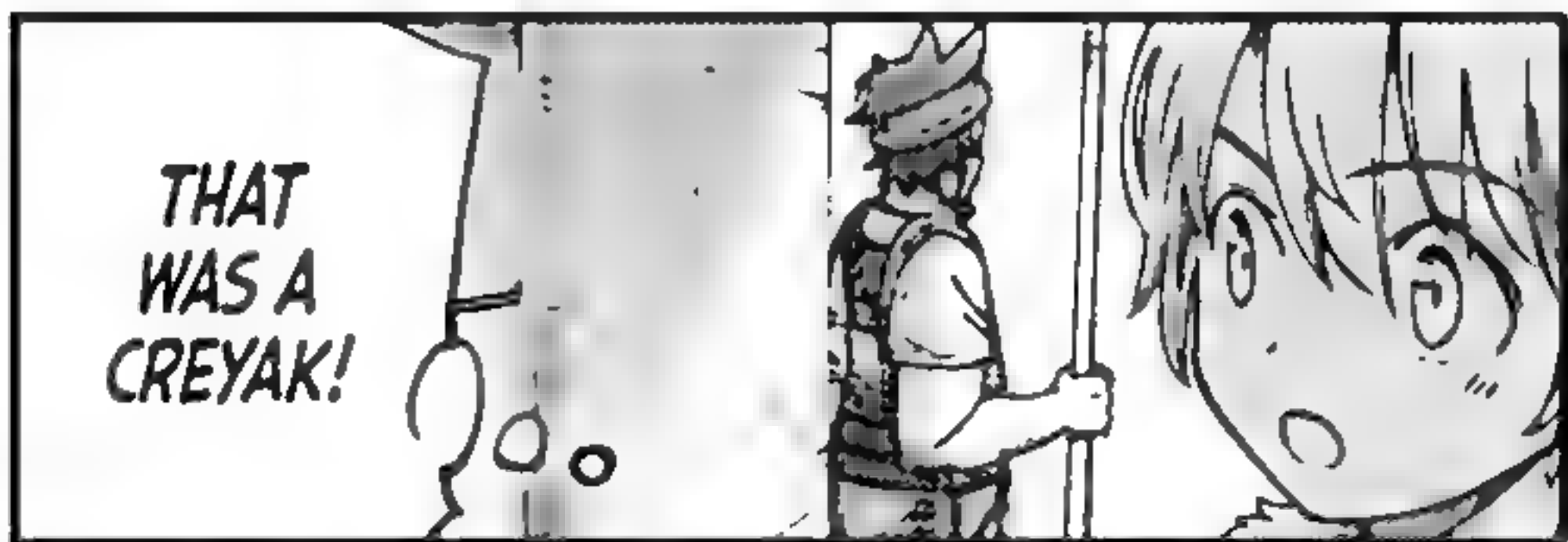
BUT FIRST,  
YOU'VE GOT  
AN EXAM  
TO TAKE!

MAIN GATE, CENTRAL LIBRARY





ONCE  
I PASS  
UNDER THIS  
GATE, I'LL  
BE AT THE  
CENTRAL  
LIBRARY.

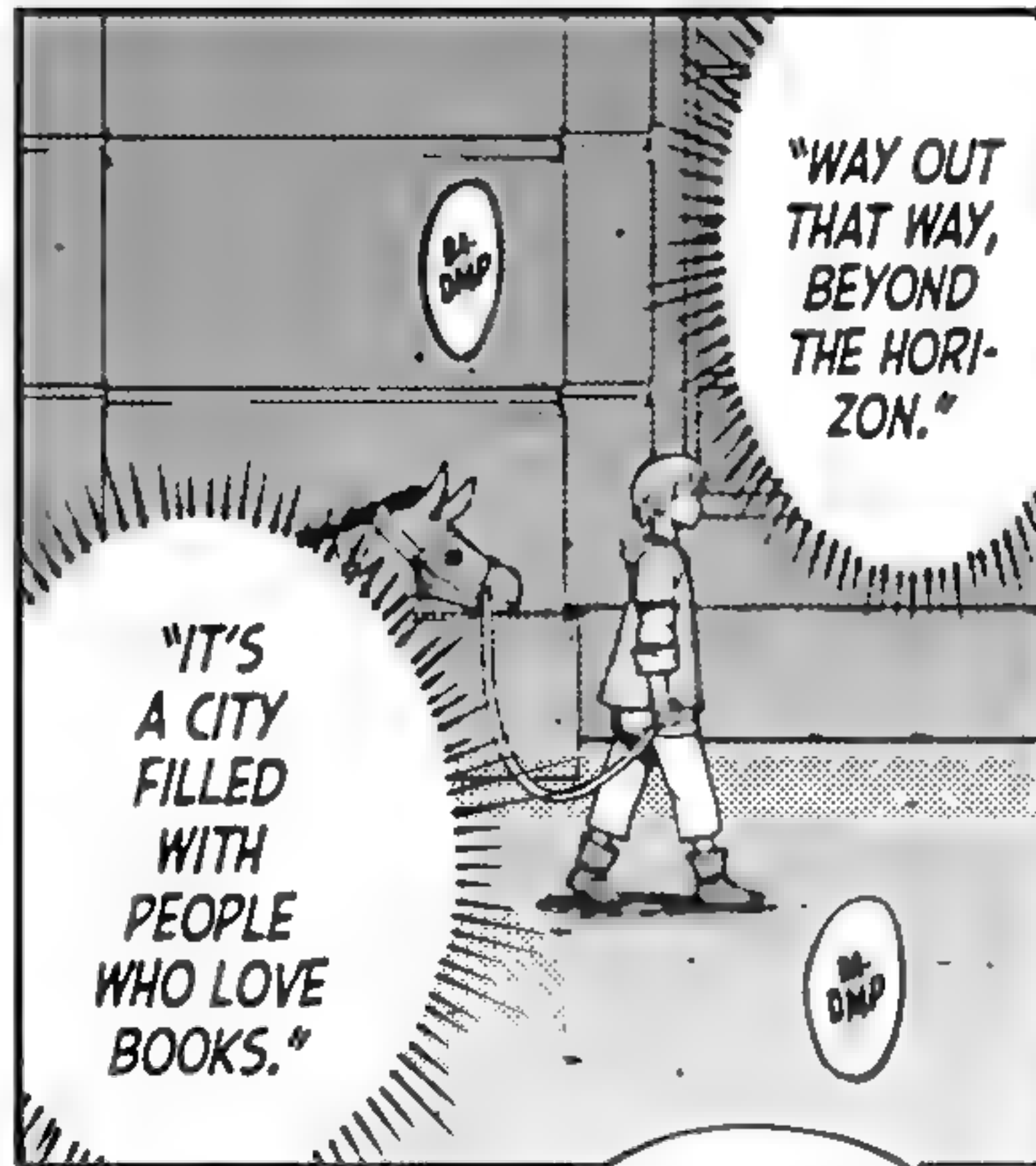


THAT  
WAS A  
CREYAK!



"THEY  
SAY  
THAT THE  
LIBRARY  
THERE..."

BA-  
DMP



"WAY OUT  
THAT WAY,  
BEYOND  
THE HORI-  
ZON."

"IT'S  
A CITY  
FILLED  
WITH  
PEOPLE  
WHO LOVE  
BOOKS."



"YOU  
KNOW  
WHAT'S  
OUT  
THERE?"

"AFTZAAK.  
THE CITY OF  
BOOKS."



BA-  
DMP



DASH !!



IT'S  
...!



THIS  
PLACE...



THIS  
...



"...HAS A  
COPY OF  
EVERY  
BOOK IN  
THE ENTIRE  
WORLD."

BA-  
DMP



# AFTZAAK CENTRAL LIBRARY

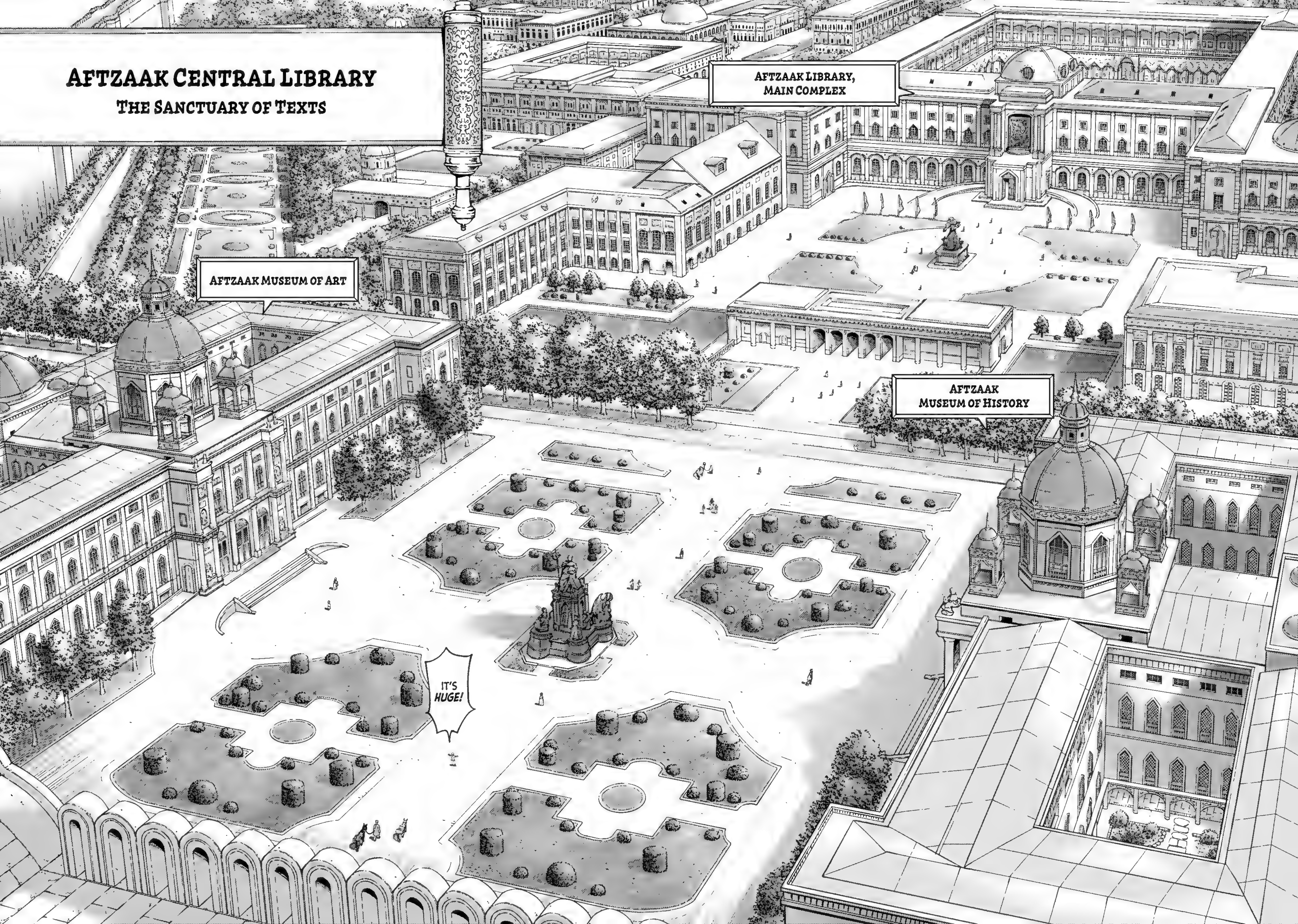
## THE SANCTUARY OF TEXTS

AFTZAAK LIBRARY,  
MAIN COMPLEX

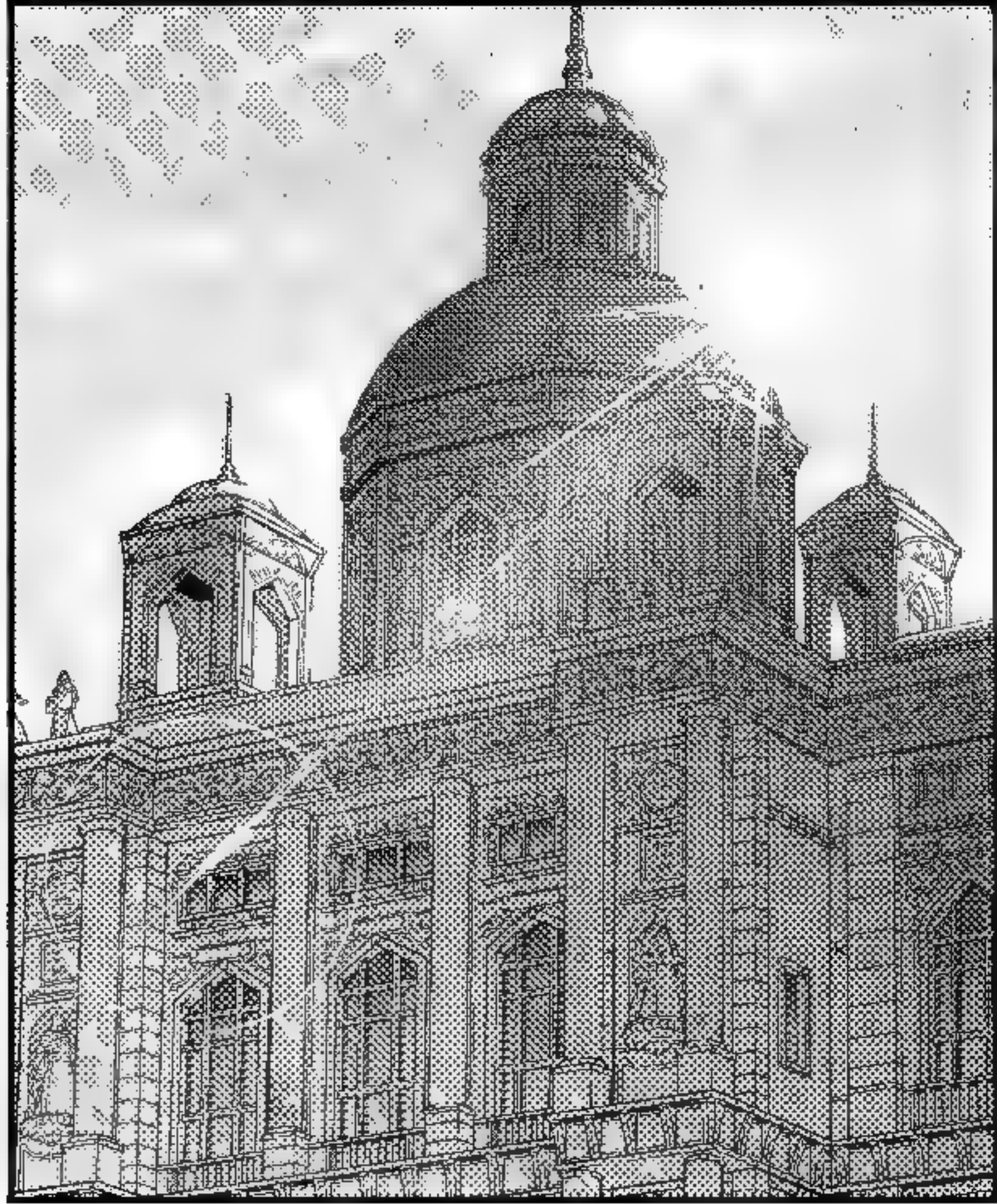
AFTZAAK MUSEUM OF ART

AFTZAAK  
MUSEUM OF HISTORY

IT'S  
HUGE!

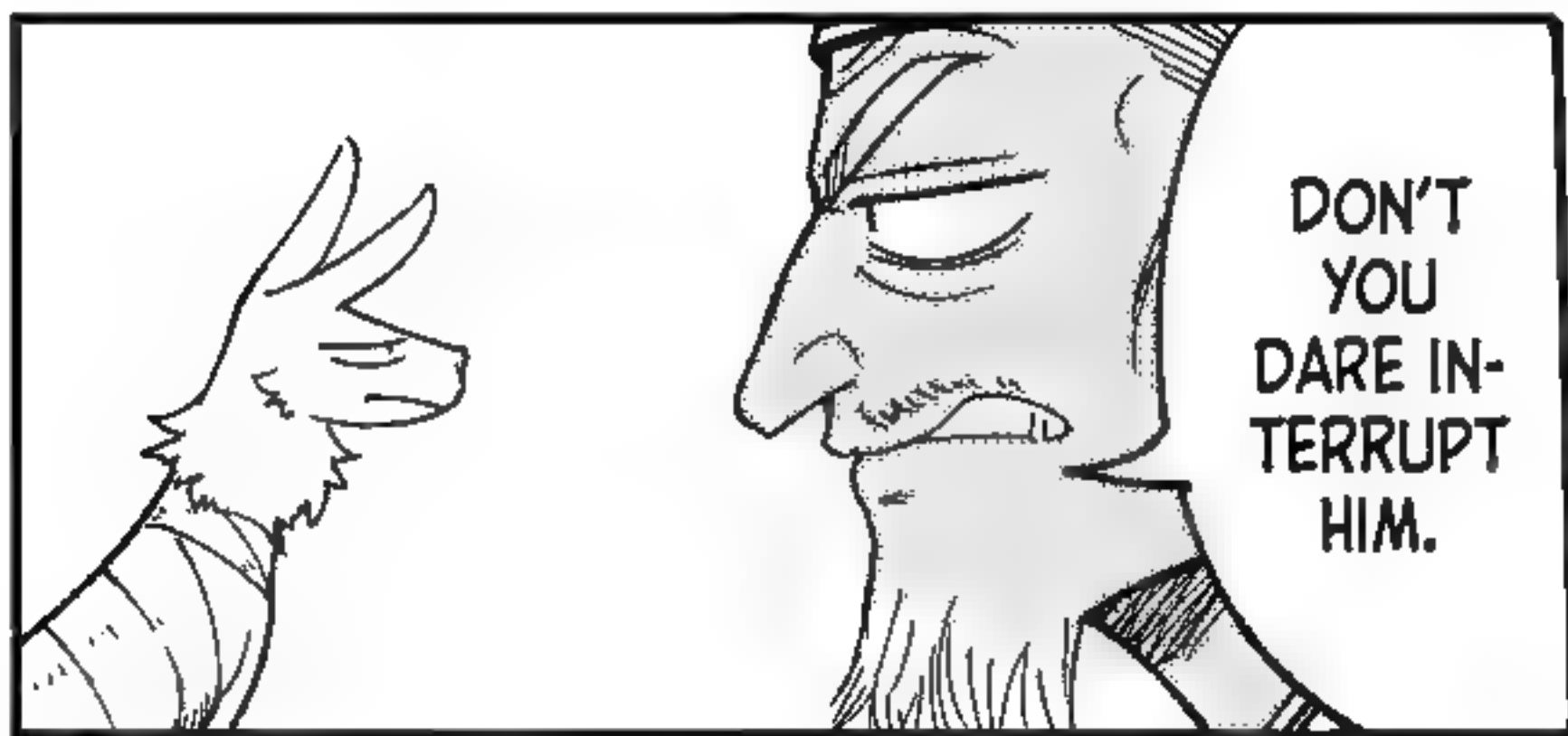






...IS THE  
CENTRAL  
LIBRARY!

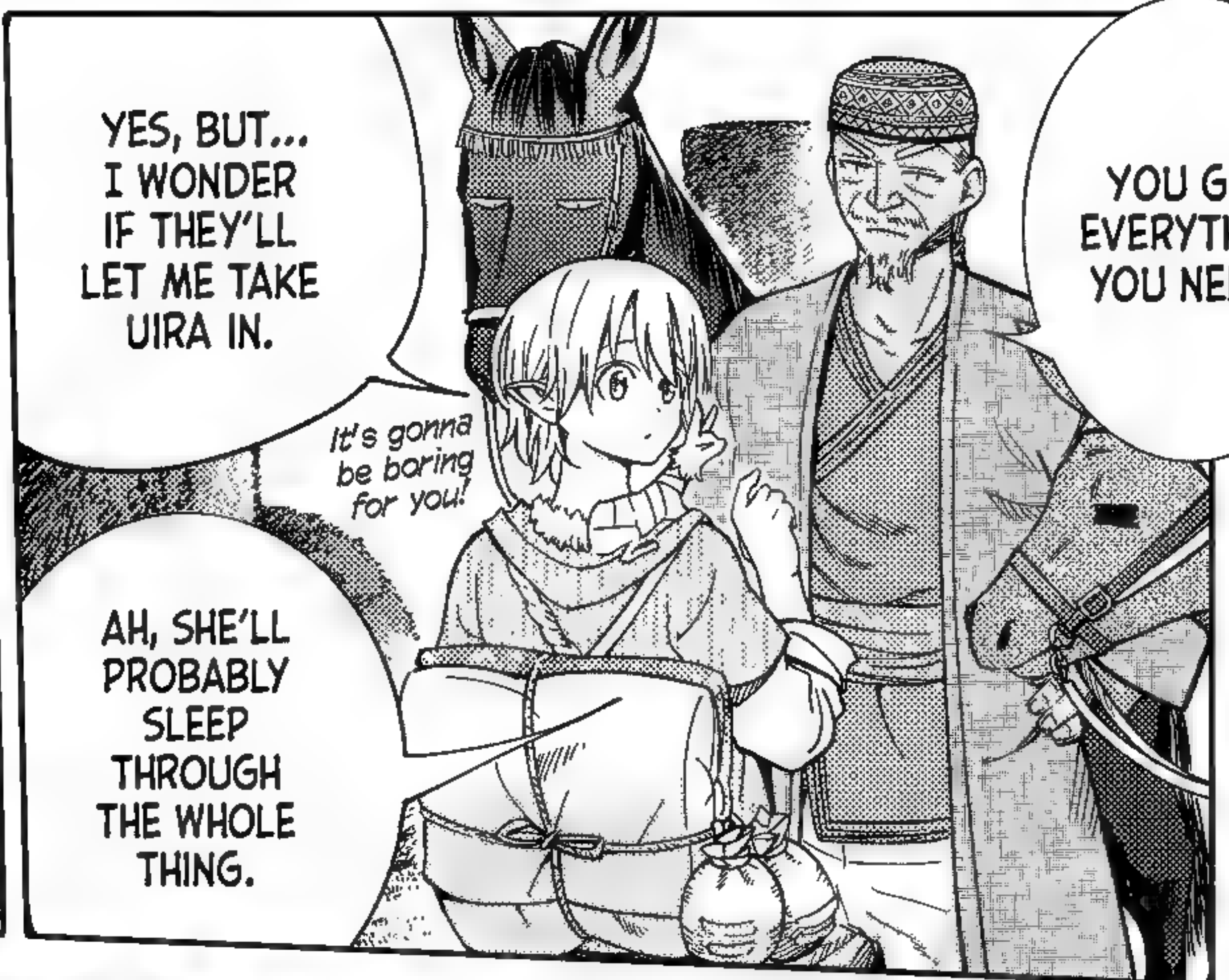
SO  
THIS...



DON'T  
YOU  
DARE IN-  
TERRUPT  
HIM.



SHE  
WOULD  
NEVER!



YES, BUT...  
I WONDER  
IF THEY'LL  
LET ME TAKE  
UIRA IN.

YOU GOT  
EVERYTHING  
YOU NEED?

*It's gonna  
be boring  
for you!*

AH, SHE'LL  
PROBABLY  
SLEEP  
THROUGH  
THE WHOLE  
THING.



HEY.  
I GOT  
THIS.

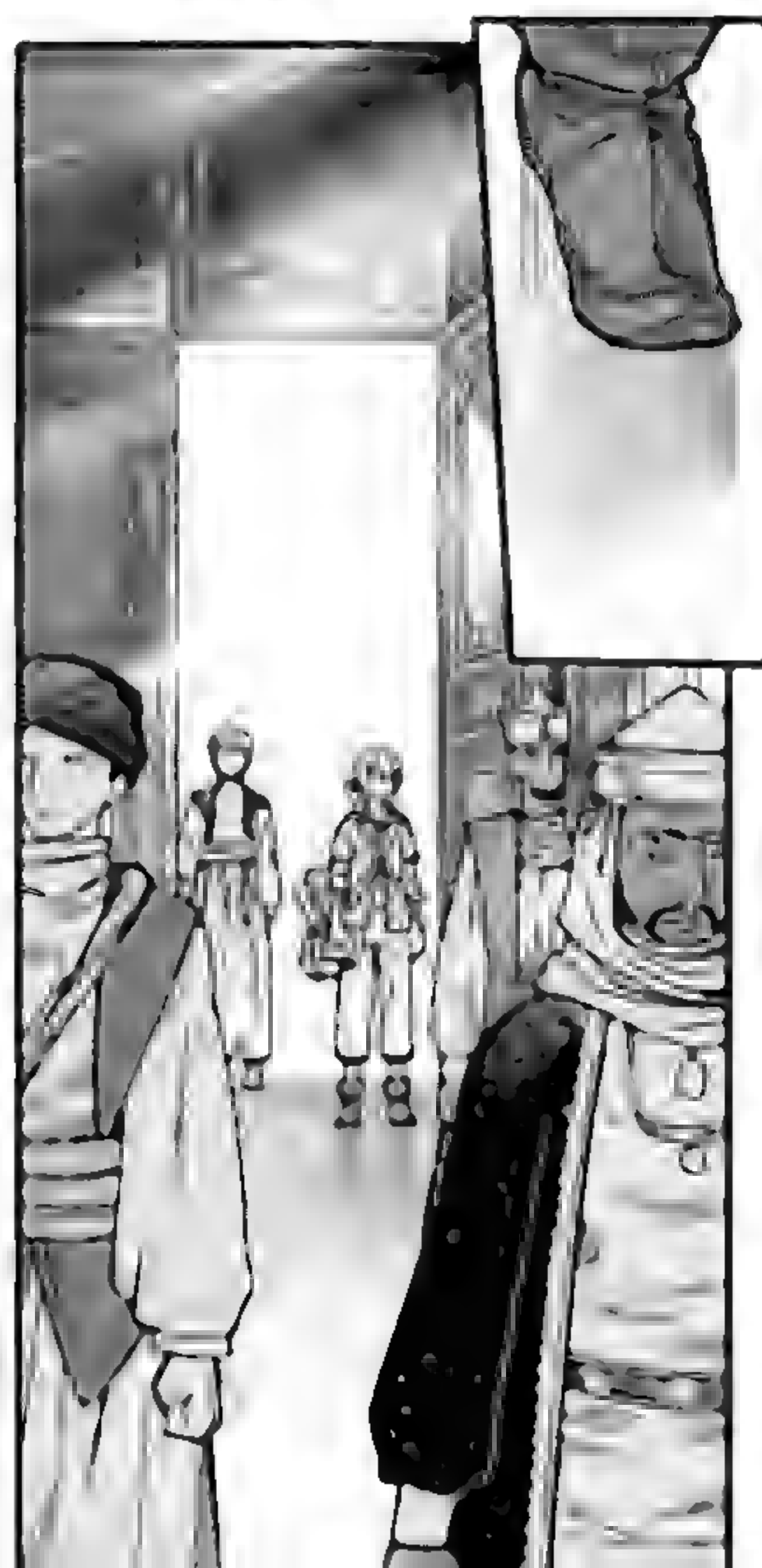
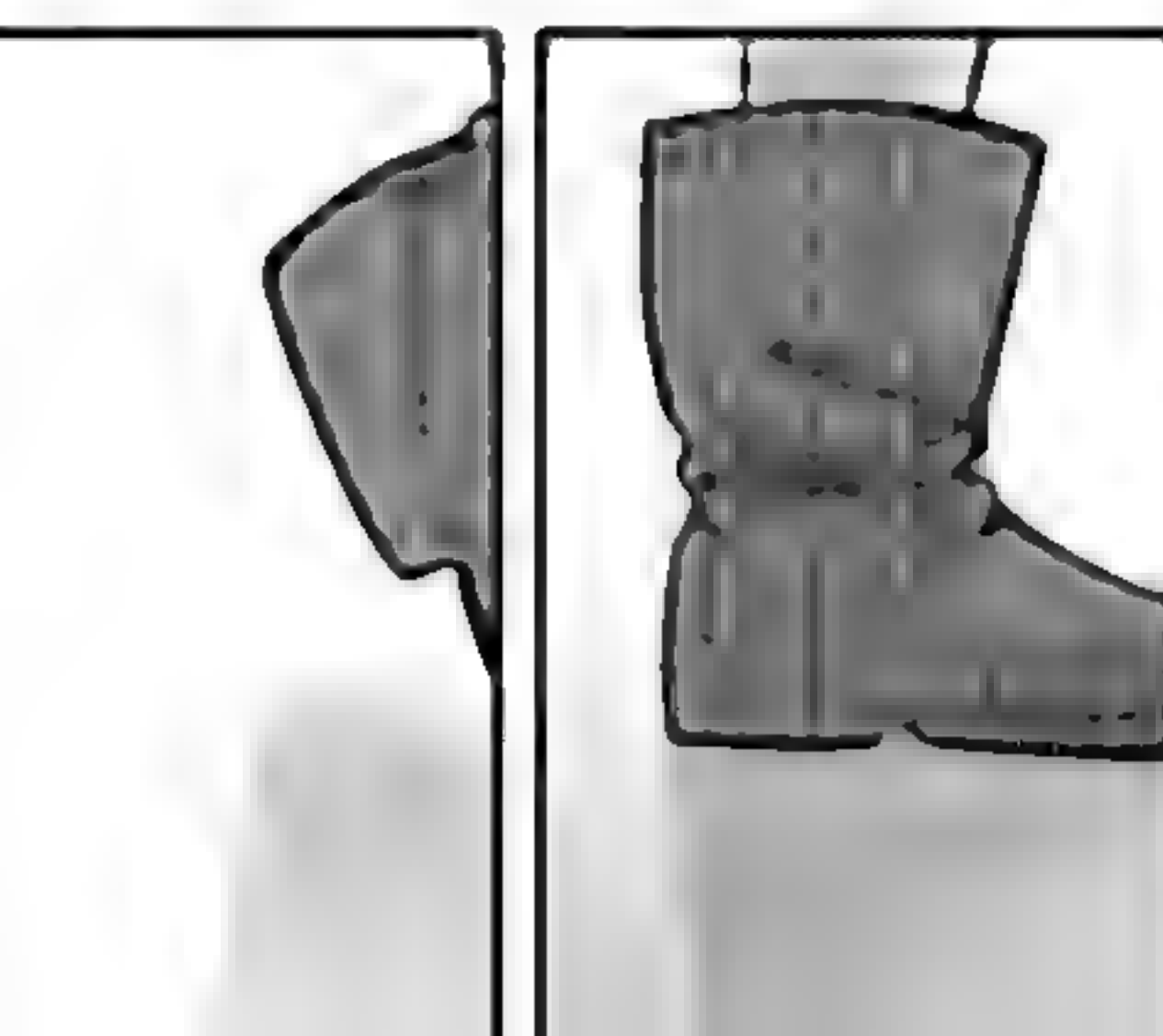
WELL, GUESS  
I'LL GET BUSY  
DRINKING  
MYSELF INTO  
THE GROUND.

DON'T GIVE  
UP PARTWAY  
THROUGH AND  
COME RUNNIN'  
BACK, 'CAUSE  
IT AIN'T GONNA  
BE PRETTY.

NEEEIGH!



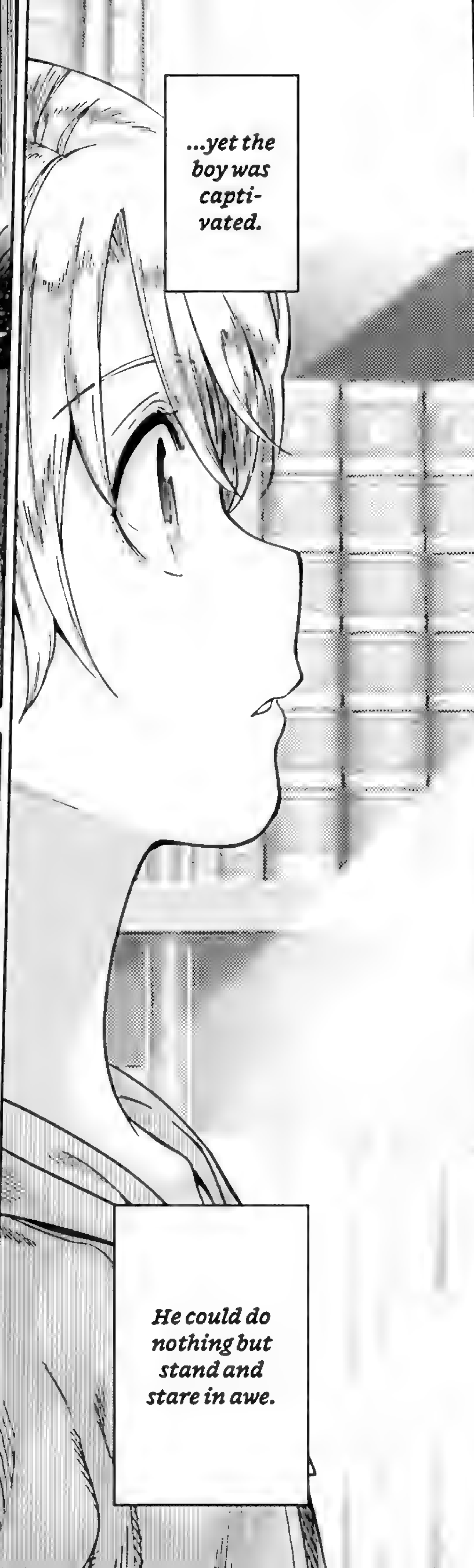
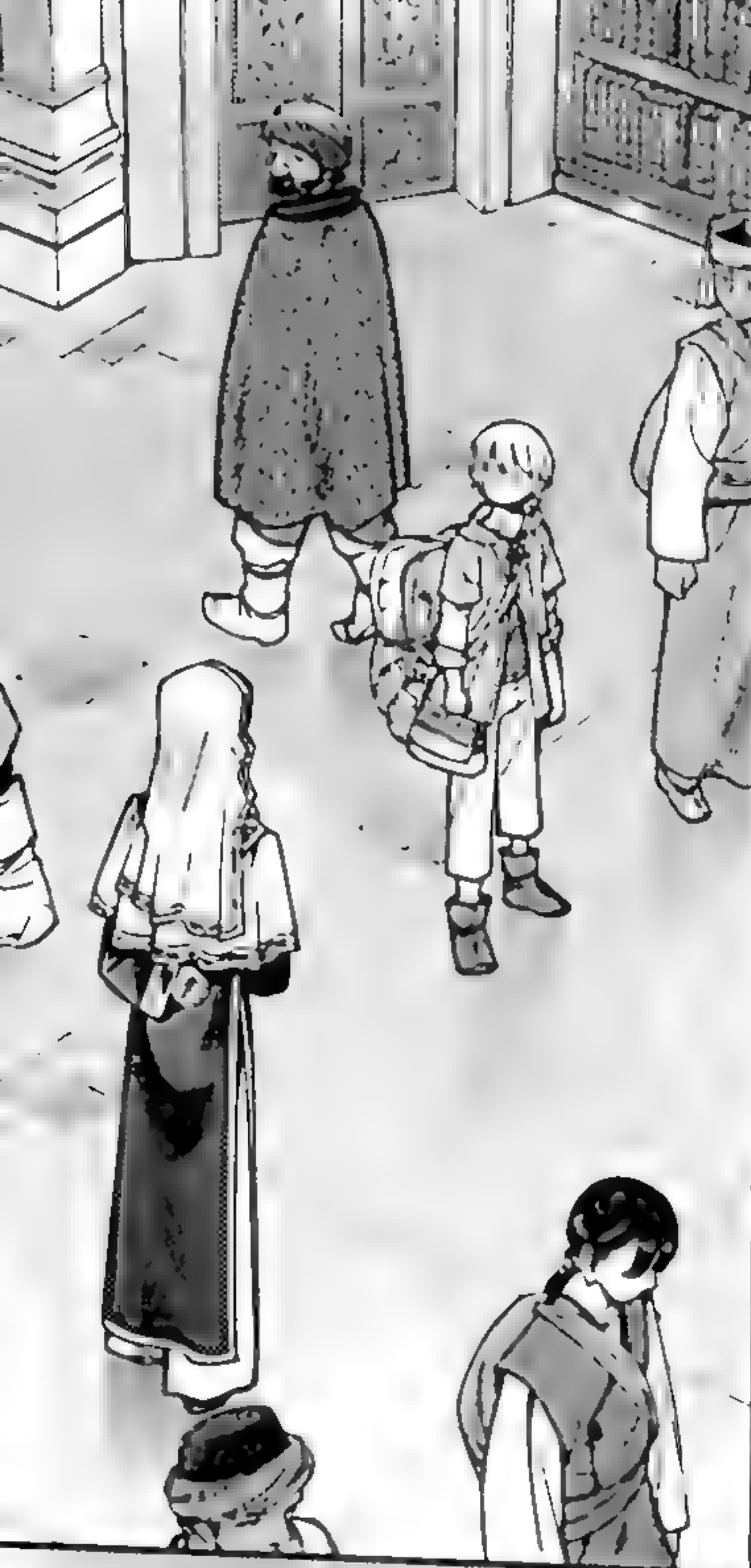
MAIN COMPLEX LOBBY









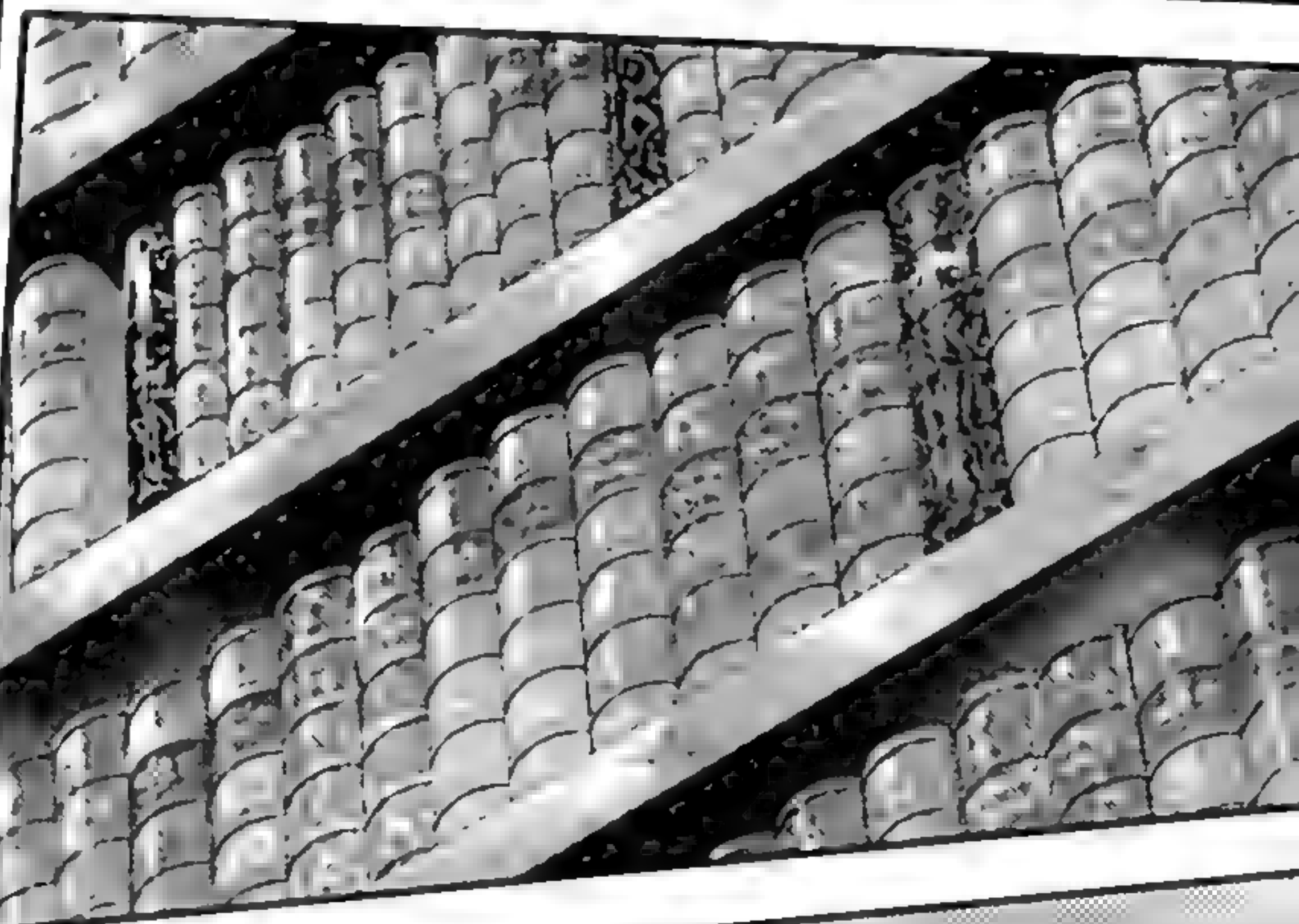
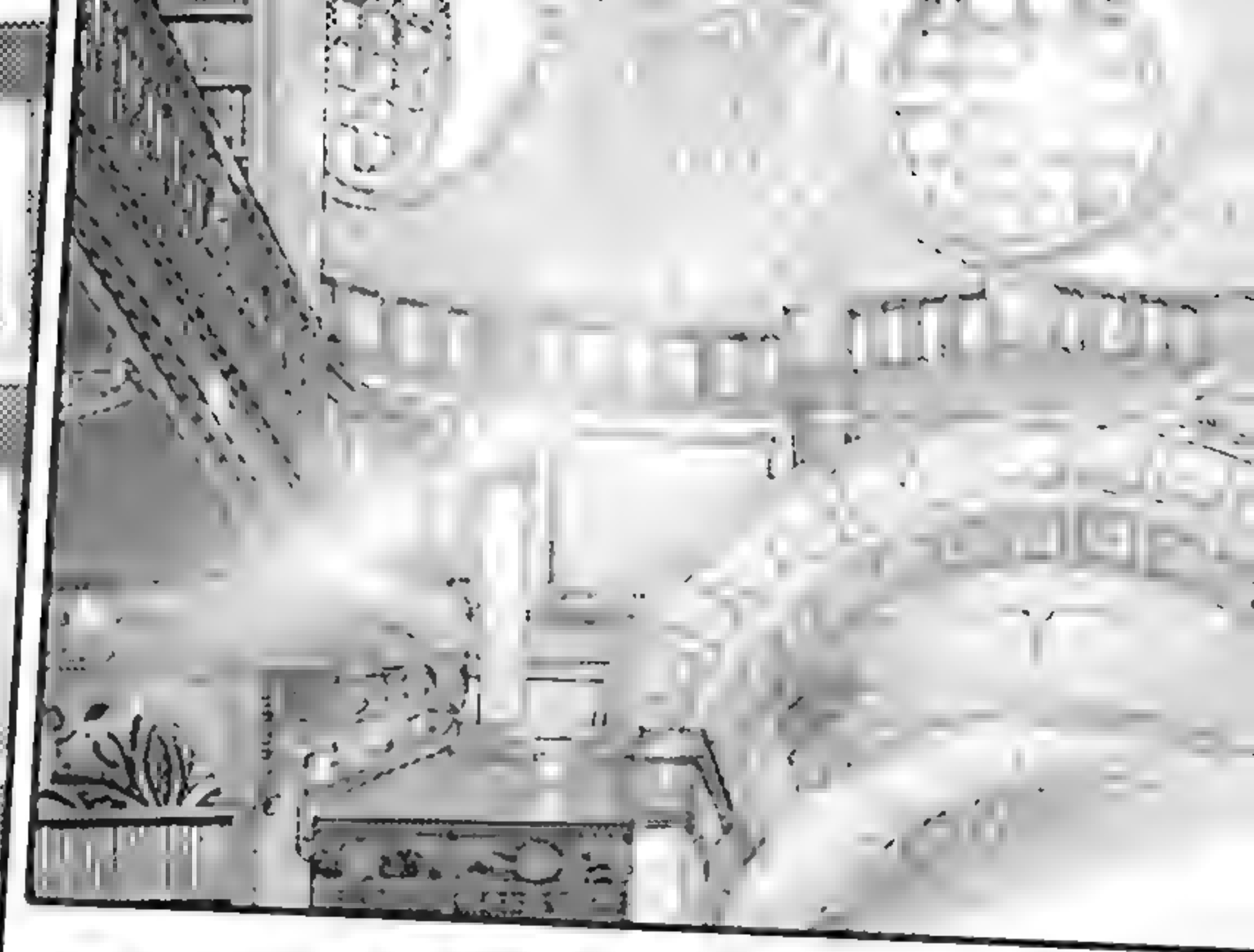


...yet the boy was captivated.

He could do nothing but stand and stare in awe.

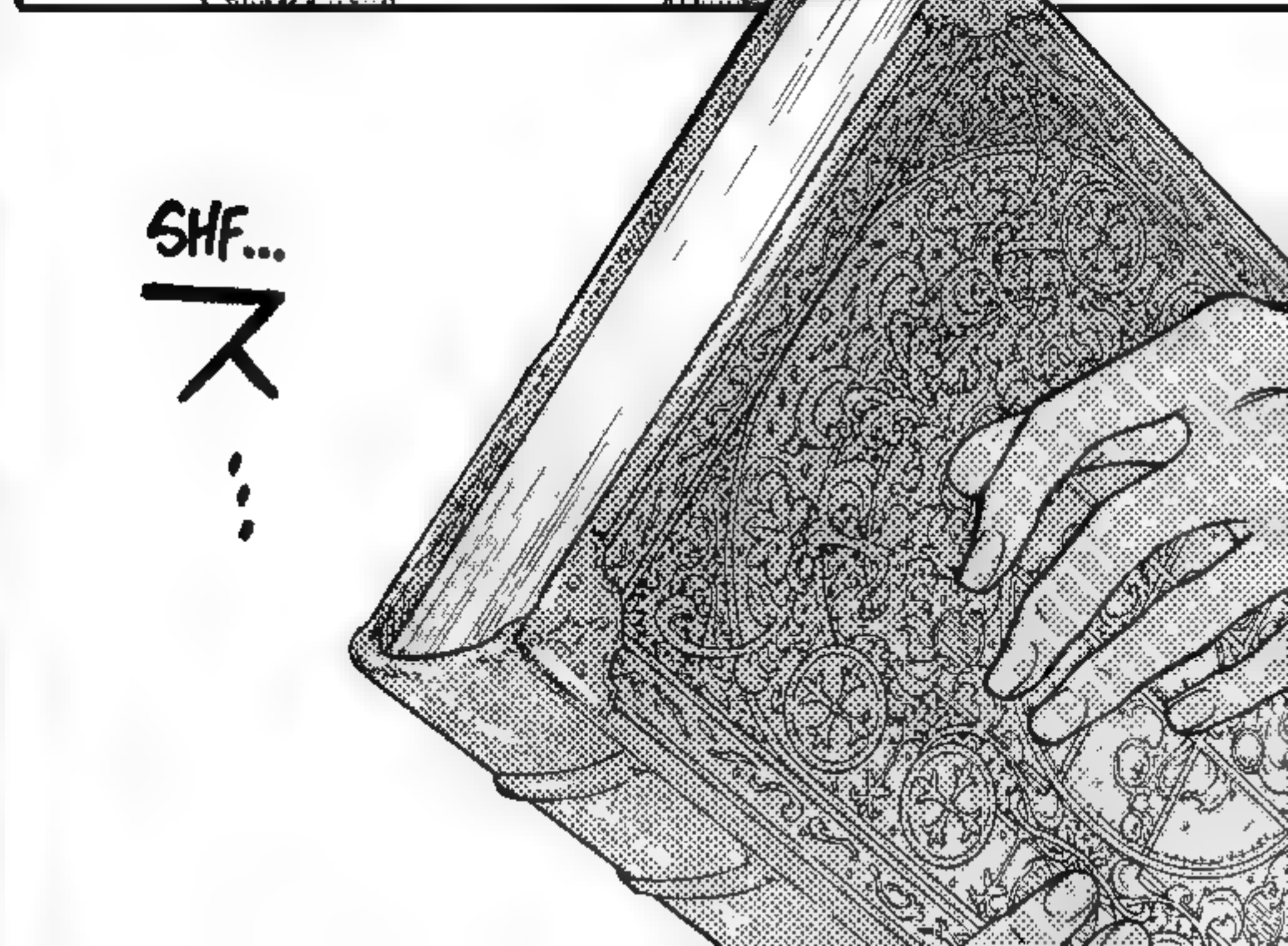


It was but a fraction of the Central Library's splendor...

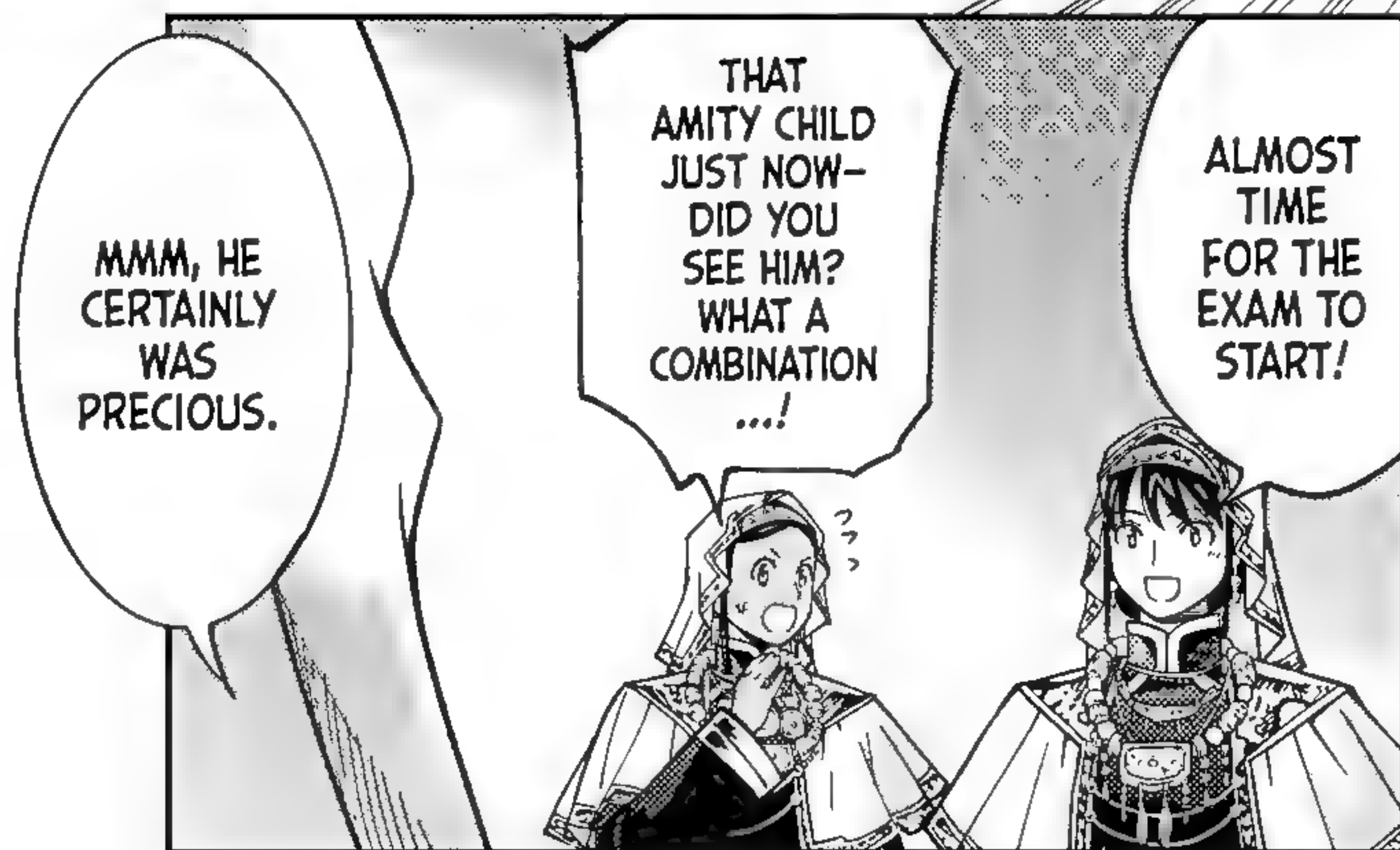
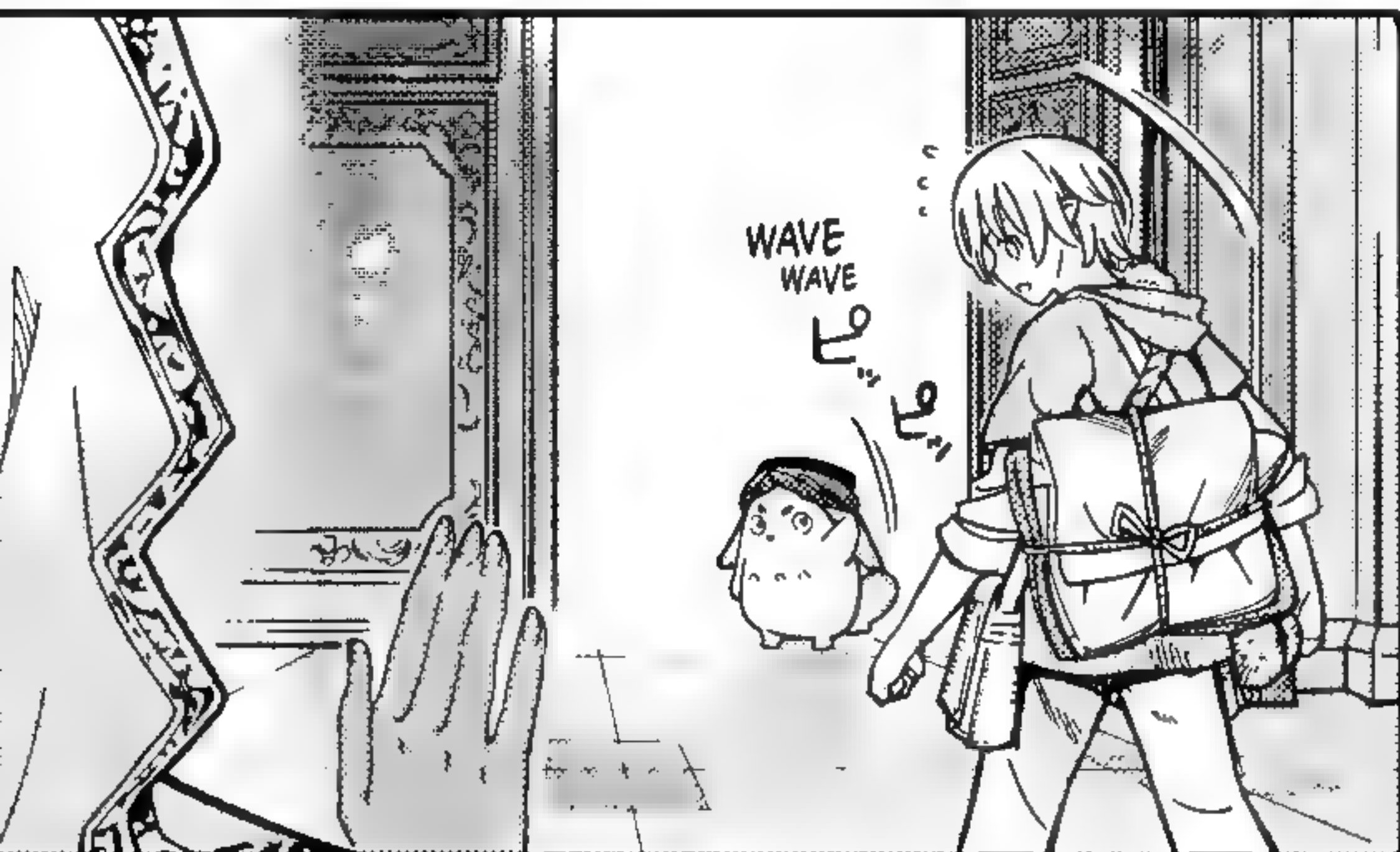
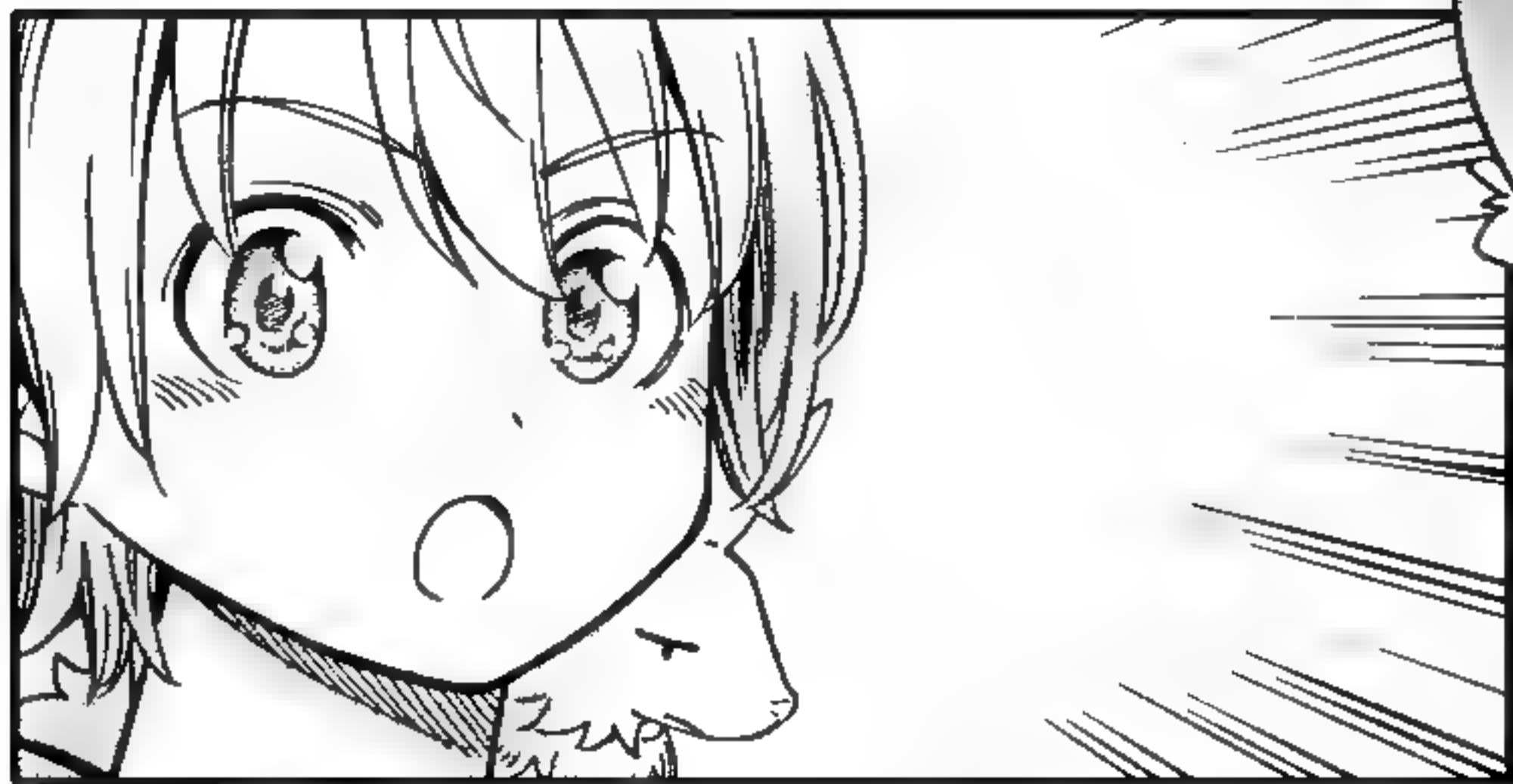


IT'S A KAFNA ...!









MMM, HE CERTAINLY WAS PRECIOUS.

THAT AMITY CHILD JUST NOW— DID YOU SEE HIM? WHAT A COMBINATION ...!

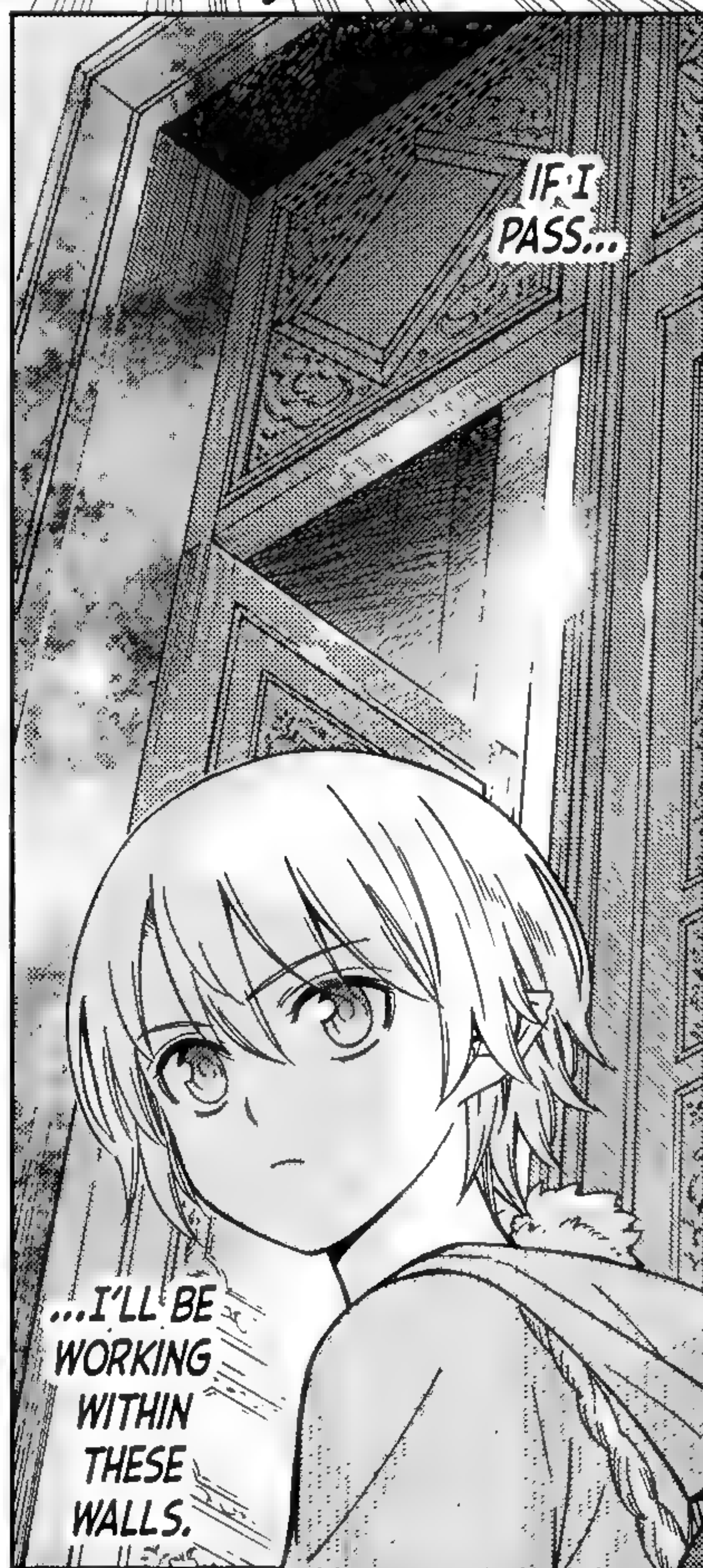
ALMOST TIME FOR THE EXAM TO START!

"Amity Child" = A child of mixed blood



SHE'S GREAT TO WORK UNDER, MINUS ONE PARTICULAR PENDANT...

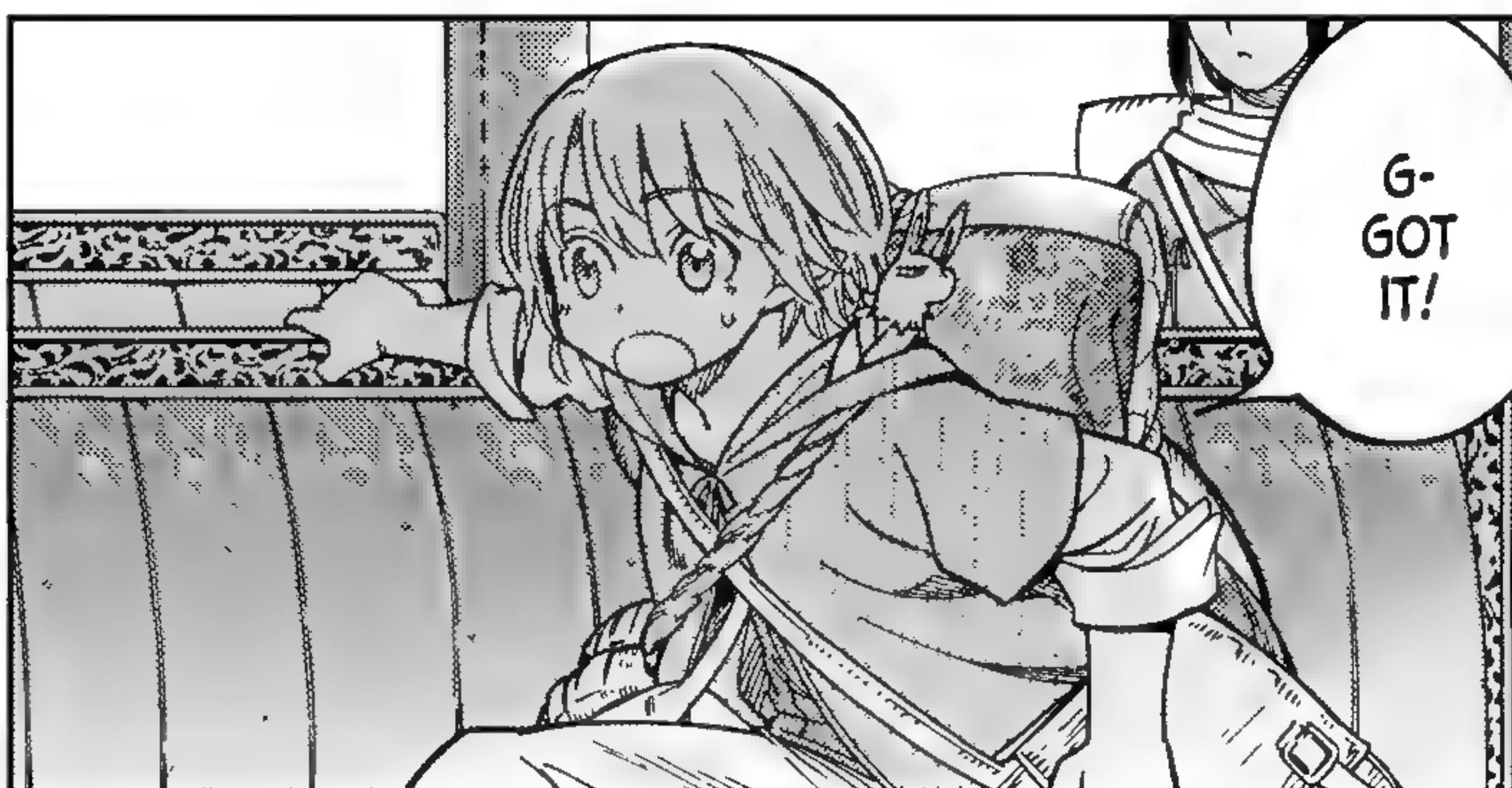
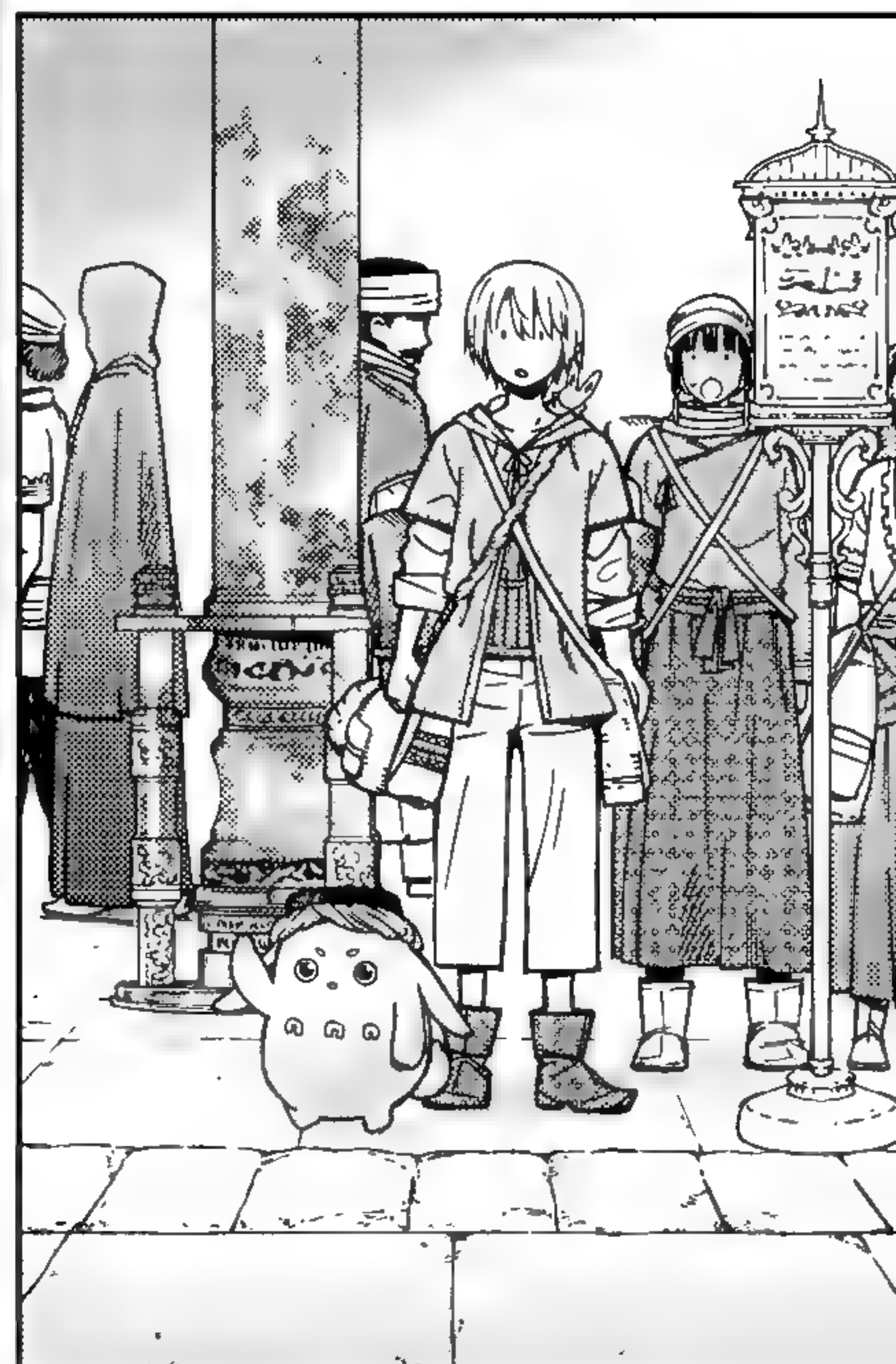
WHAT I WOULDN'T GIVE TO SEE HIM A BIT DISTRESSED ...



IF I PASS...

...I'LL BE WORKING WITHIN THESE WALLS.









YES,  
THAT'S  
RIGHT.

HEY  
THERE!  
YOU HERE  
FOR THE  
EXAM?

WOW.  
YOUR  
HYRON IS  
EXCELLENT.

ME,  
TOO!



THE NAME'S  
PEPERICO  
PRADHATTI.

BUT I  
APPRE-  
CIATE  
THE  
THOUGHT  
!

REACH  
↑

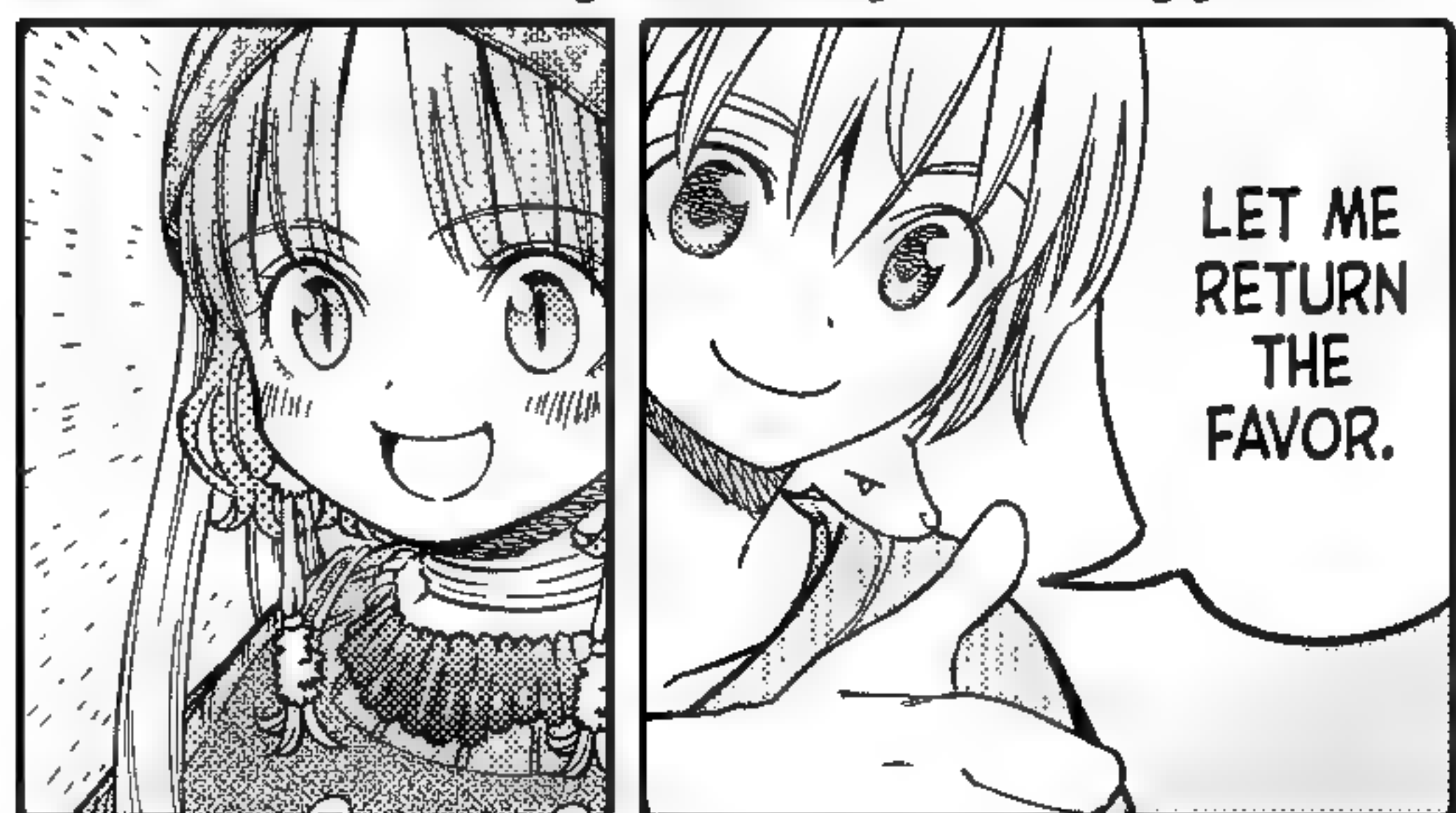


I'VE  
GOT  
READING  
AND  
WRITING  
DOWN  
PAT.

GOLLY.  
PLEASE,  
NO NEED  
FOR  
FLATTERY.

BUT  
*SPEAKING'S*  
STILL ROUGH  
'N' TUMBLE.

Unusual word choices are being used here to represent a strong spoken accent.



LET ME  
RETURN  
THE  
FAVOR.



SHE'S  
REACHING  
FOR A  
HAND-  
SHAKE!

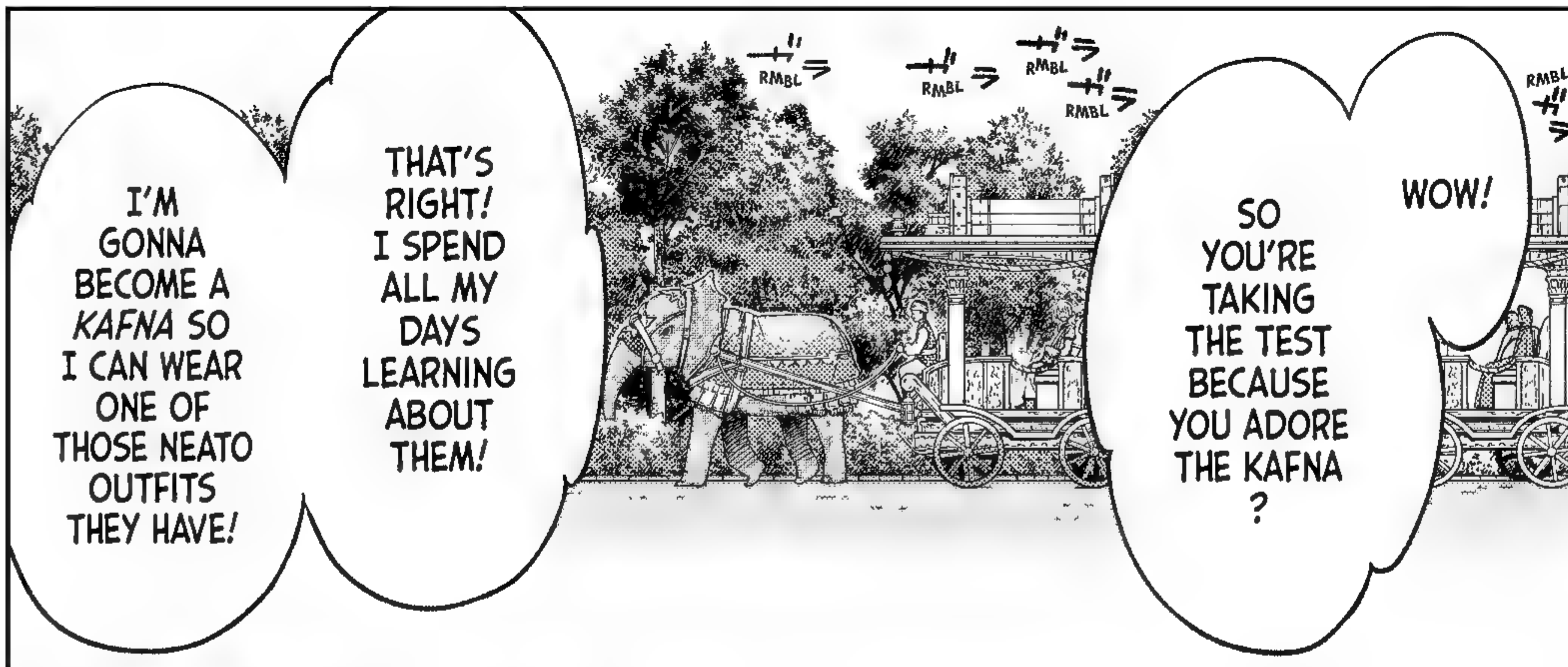
THEO  
FUMIS.  
NICE TO  
MEET  
YOU.

HEY  
THERE,  
THEO!

*Pressing  
thumbs  
together  
was the  
traditional  
Kokopah  
greeting.*

WELL,  
AREN'T  
YOU THE  
CHARMER  
?!







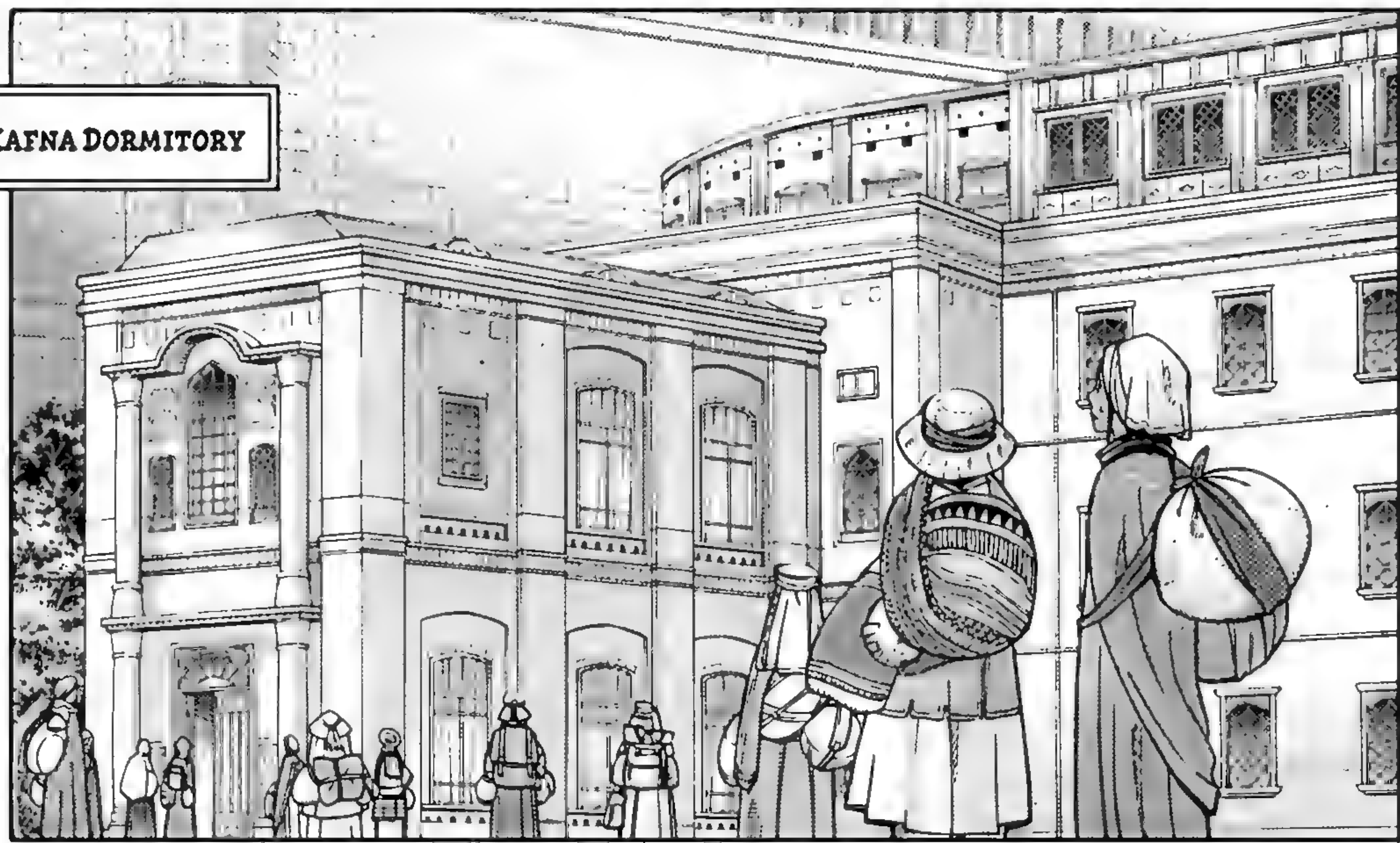


...ALL  
STARTED  
OUT BY  
TAKING  
THIS EXAM!  
FOR REAL!

THINK  
ABOUT IT!  
EVEN MASTER  
PIARA AND  
MASTER BLEU-  
KAFNA WHO  
HAVE BECOME  
SAGES...

THIS  
GETS  
ME ALL  
WORKED  
UP!

THE KAFNA DORMITORY



YEAH,  
THAT'S,  
UH, THE  
EXAM  
SITE.

ACK!  
CAN YOU  
BELIEVE  
IT?!

THIS  
IS WHERE  
THE KAFNA  
USUALLY  
SPEND THEIR  
NIGHTS!



I'M  
ALMOST  
OFF TO  
START MY  
ADVENTURE...





*So  
began  
the  
written  
stage...*

*...of the  
Kafna  
Exam—  
known  
among  
students  
as "The  
Nightmares."*





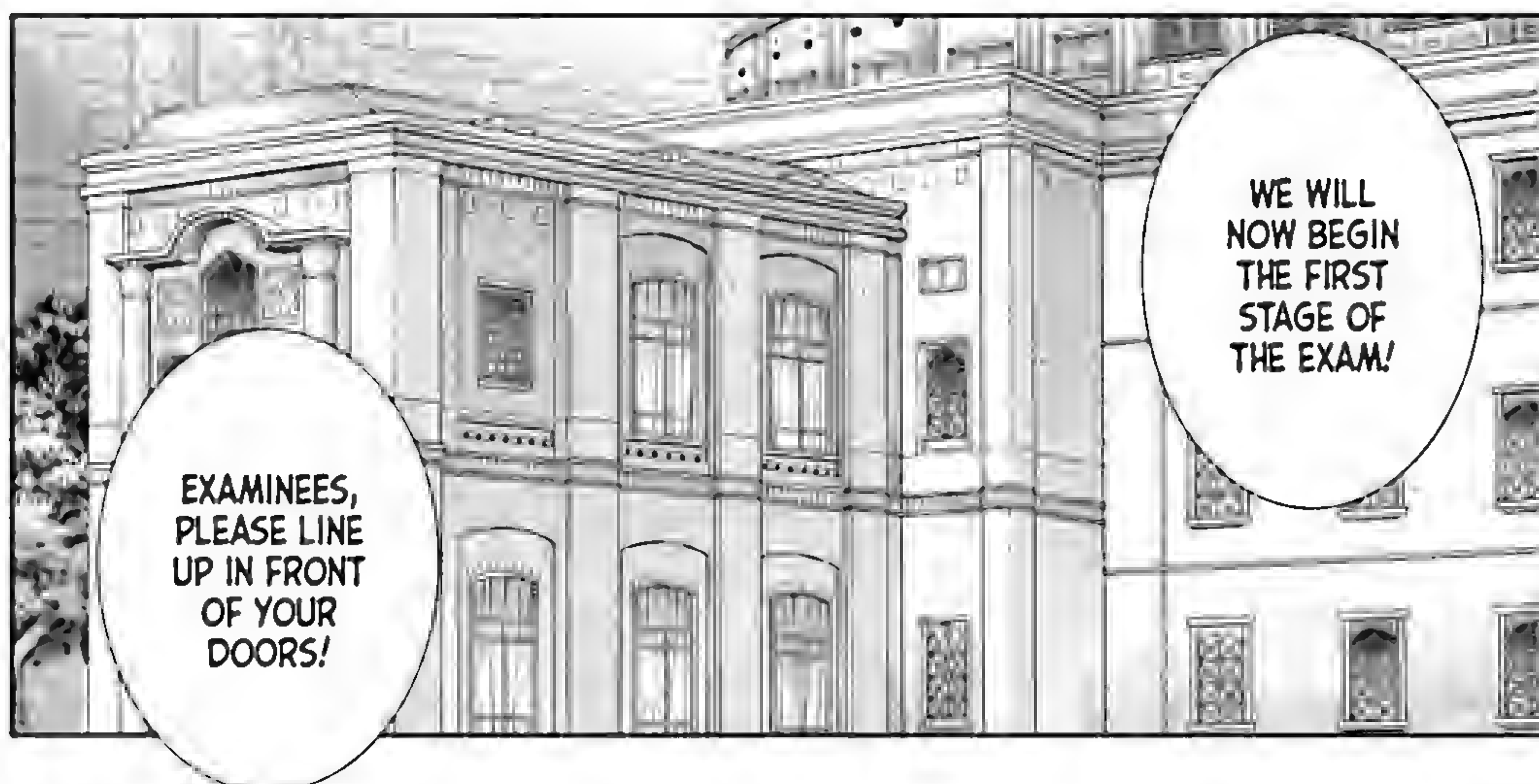
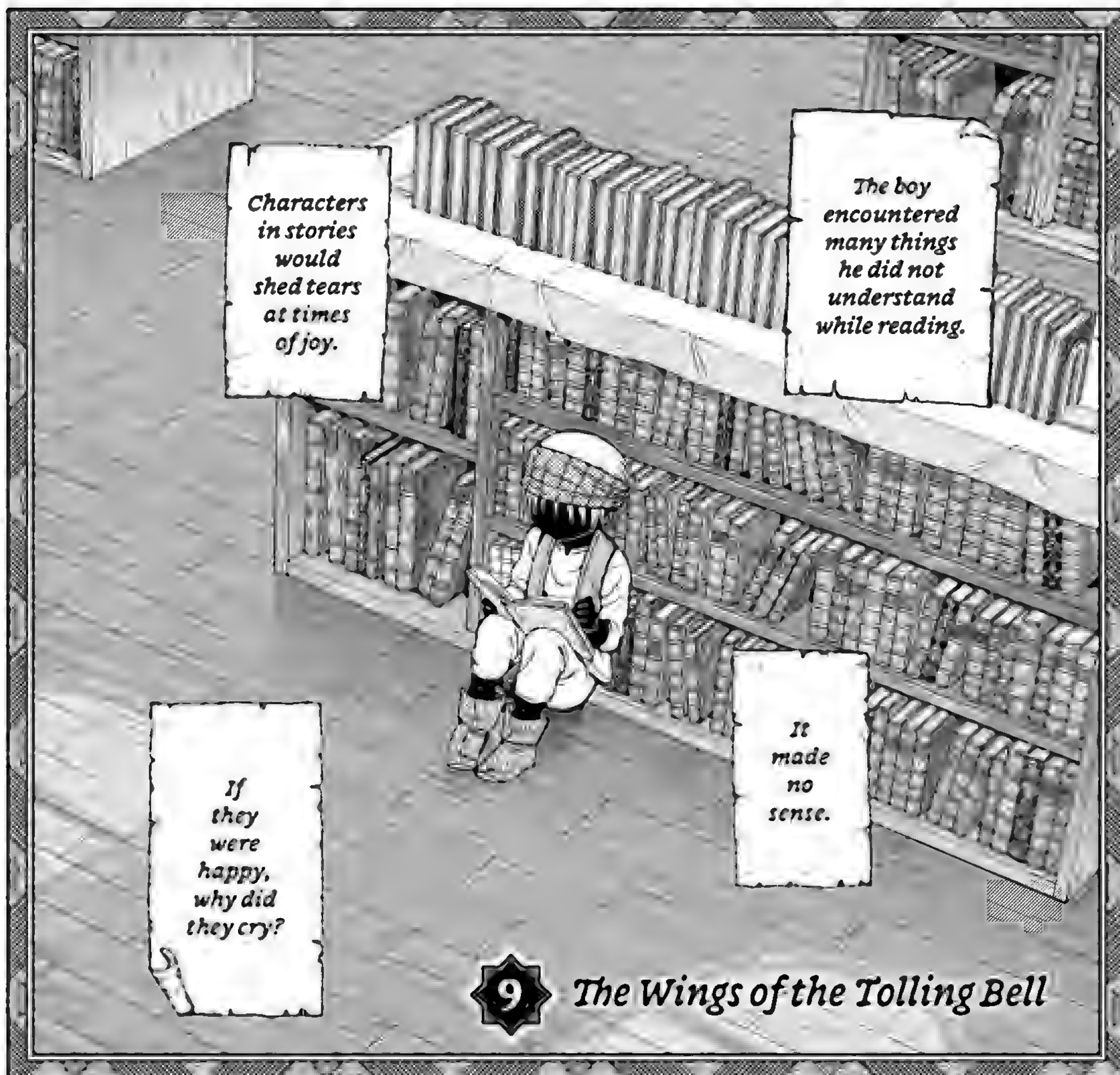
This area, reserved for agricultural use, connects to the City's residential district. Countless merchants pass through it, sustaining the City's ever-bustling markets. Pictured in the background are two wandering traders perched atop an enormous terrestrial lizard known as a "Kew."





When passing through the main gate of the Central Library, visitors first encounter this depiction of the seven magi who fought against the Emissary of Wormwood. At top is the only magus to have fallen in that battle, The Magus of Reason. To the left is the protector of books, The Magus of the Library. To the right is the Chief of the Rakta, The Magus of the Almanac.

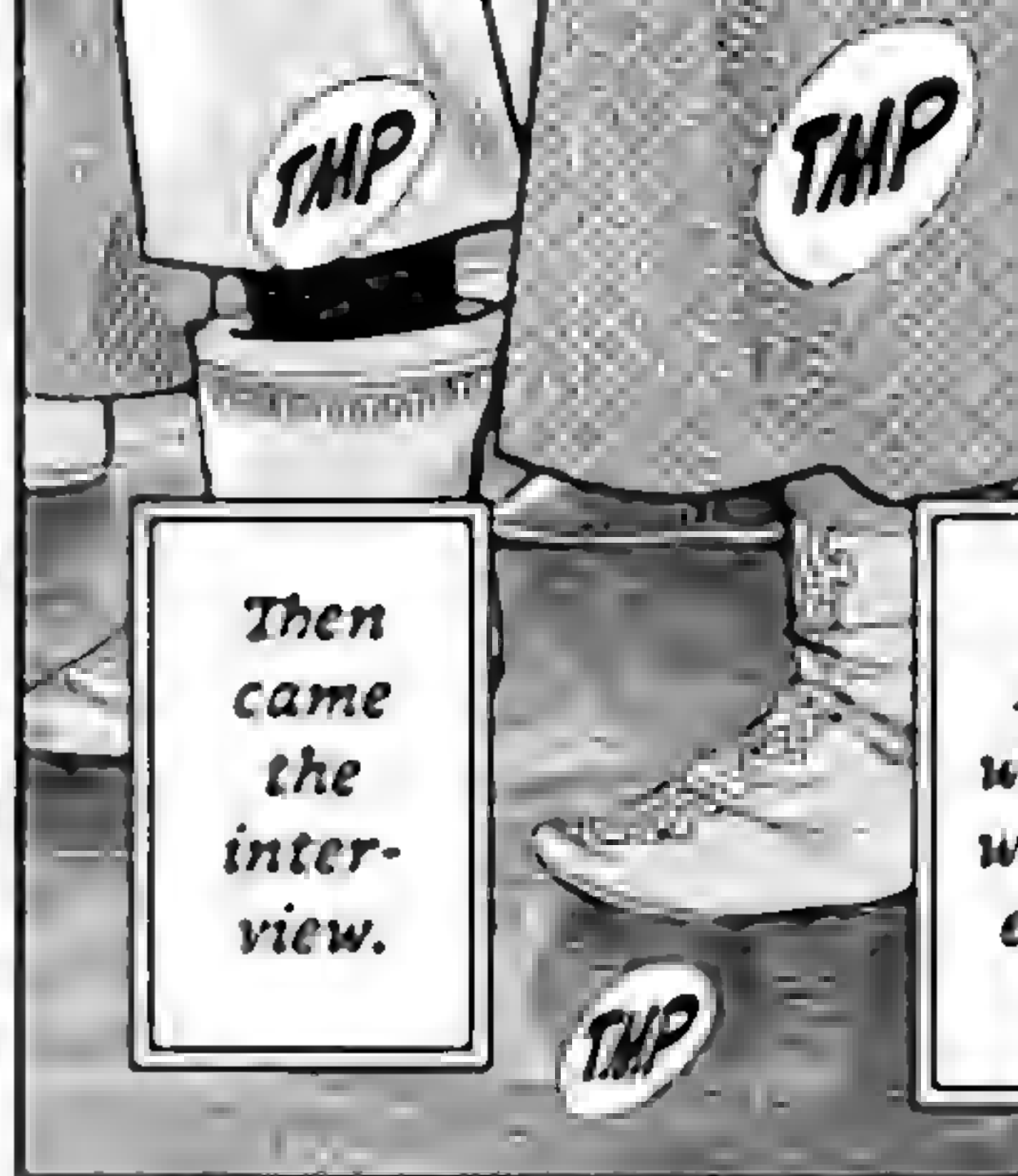








Last  
was the  
practical  
compo-  
nent.



Then  
came  
the  
inter-  
view.



First  
was the  
written  
exam.

The  
Kafna  
Exam  
Consisted  
of Three  
Stages:



Each year  
saw over  
800  
examinees.

FIRST,  
I ASK YOU  
TO ALWAYS  
BEAR ONE  
POINT IN  
MIND.

Of them,  
some 20 would  
pass and be  
accepted as  
apprentices  
at the Central  
Library.



IF AT  
ANY POINT  
YOU FEEL THAT  
YOU'VE REACHED  
YOUR LIMIT,  
PLEASE, ALERT AN  
ADMINISTRATOR  
IMMEDIATELY.

EVERY YEAR,  
A NUMBER OF  
EXAMINEES BREAK  
DOWN DURING THE  
WRITTEN STAGE,  
AND WE ARE FORCED  
TO REMOVE THEM  
FROM THE  
PREMISES.

CENTRAL LIBRARY, PERSONNEL OFFICE  
**CHISE REDD**





SURE  
YOU'RE  
NOT IN  
THE  
WRONG  
PLACE  
?

クスクス  
SNICKER  
SNICKER



UGH,  
YOU'RE  
FILTHY!

ARE YOU  
**REALLY**  
HERE TO  
TAKE THE  
EXAM?



HOWEVER,  
YOU WILL  
NOT BE  
ALLOWED  
TO LEAVE  
YOUR ROOMS  
FOR ANY  
REASON  
OTHER THAN  
VISITS TO THE  
LAVATORY.

HOW YOU  
CHOOSE TO  
SPEND THE  
TIME IS UP  
TO YOU.  
EAT AND  
SLEEP AS  
YOU WISH.



LET'S  
DO  
THIS!

...!



IF I PASS,  
I'M PLANNING  
TO TURN THESE  
CLOTHES INTO  
PAPER AS A  
KEEPSAKE.

SORRY  
ABOUT  
THE SMELL.

*It's been  
a long  
journey.*



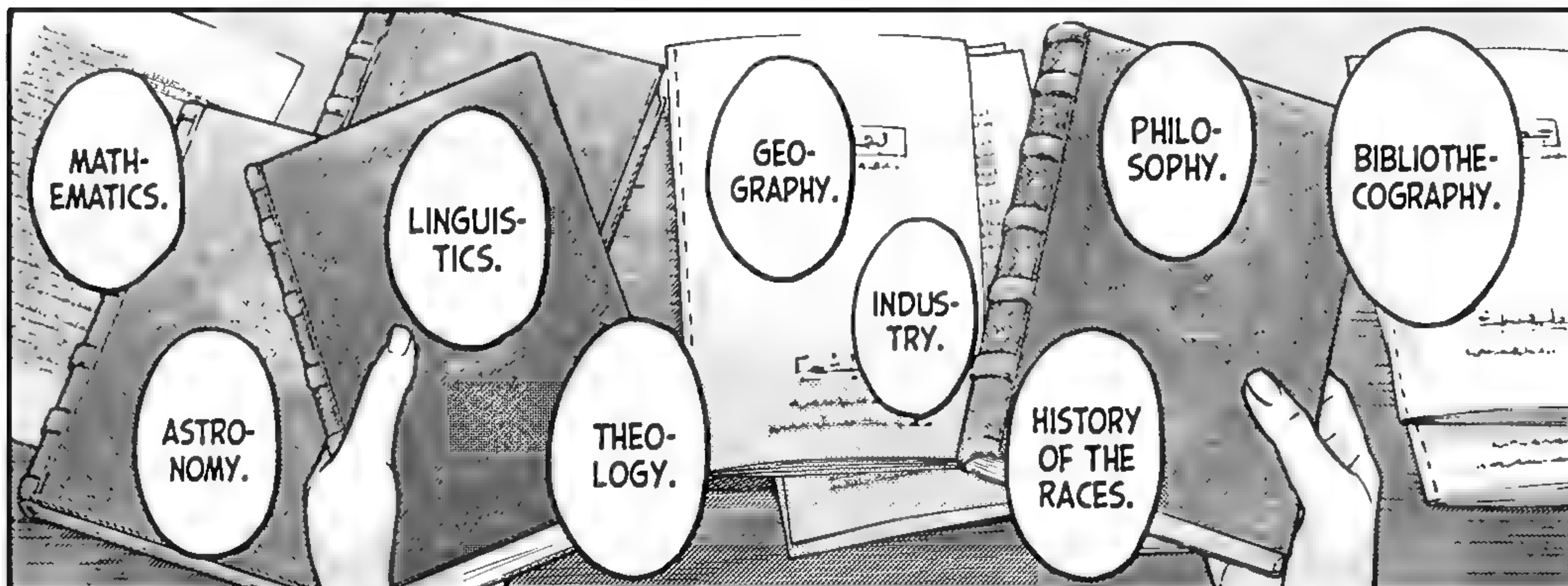
YOUR  
TEST  
BEGINS  
NOW.

FOR THE  
WRITTEN  
EXAM,  
YOU WILL  
HAVE  
THREE  
DAYS.









NATURAL  
PHILOS-  
OPHY  
...!



"Natural Philosophy": Here used to refer to the natural sciences.







SO MANY ...  
THERE ARE SO MANY QUESTIONS ...!!

EEP...



TIME TO PUT ON A SHOW FOR THE AGES!



WOO!

IT'S FINALLY HAPPENING!



HEH!

LOOKS LIKE FUN. MIGHT AS WELL TRY TO BE THE FIRST ONE TO FINISH.



NGGHH ...

SHOULD I TAKE MY MASK OFF? I'M NOT AT HOME ...



FIRST, I'LL SKIM THE QUESTIONS ...

... THEN START WITH THE ONES I KNOW.



WHAT A DREADFULLY AUSTERE ROOM.

BETTER GET SOME INCENSE BURNING TO MAKE IT LIVABLE.



OH, BUT WAIT... NOW THAT I'VE EATEN, I'M STARTING TO GET SLEEPY.

MUNCH  
ムン  
ムン  
ムン

GOTTA GET MY STRENGTH UP FIRST.



*The First Night*







CAN'T WORK  
EFFICIENTLY  
IF I'M TIRED.  
AND I'D  
MAKE MORE  
MISTAKES!

TIME TO  
GET A  
NAP IN.

...BUT I  
KNOW I  
CAN'T  
AFFORD  
...

...TO SPARE  
A MOMENT ON  
SLEEP FOR THE  
NEXT THREE  
DAYS!



WE KAFNA  
MUST KNOW  
THE TERMS  
OF THEIR  
ARTS.

ALL MANNER OF  
SPECIALISTS COME  
TO THE CENTRAL  
LIBRARY. SCHOLARS  
VERSED IN A SINGLE  
SUBJECT AND  
SEEKING SPECIFIC  
KNOWLEDGE.

LOOKS LIKE  
WE'LL BE  
WEATHERING  
A SQUALL  
DURING THE  
EXAM.

THE  
CLOUDS  
AREN'T  
LETTING  
UP.

AND AT  
TIMES WE  
MUST  
GUIDE  
OTHERS  
IN THEIR  
SEARCHES.

AT  
TIMES  
WE MUST  
CATEGO-  
RIZE.

AT  
TIMES  
WE  
MUST  
DELVE.

Shift's  
up.



THE  
OVERWHELMING  
SCOPE OF THE  
WRITTEN EXAM  
ALLOWS US TO  
IDENTIFY SUCH  
VESSELS.

THUS WE SEEK  
READY VESSELS,  
EAGER TO FILL  
THEMSELVES  
WITH NEW WORDS  
FROM ALL WALKS  
OF LIFE.



NO  
...

WHETHER  
THEY  
STRUGGLE  
AGAINST  
SLEEP OR  
NOT, HELL  
AWAITS.

Ngh...

Nngh...

THE  
ANSWER...  
ON PAGE  
204...

THERE'S  
STILL...

IT IS  
A TEST  
THAT WILL  
DESERVES  
TO BE  
CALLED  
"THE NIGHT-  
MARES."

...SO  
MUCH  
...

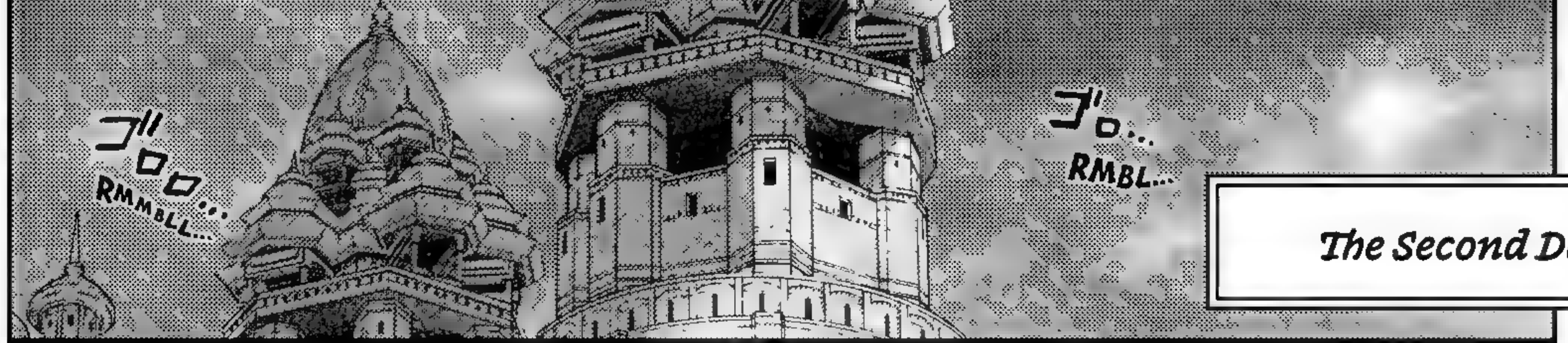
...SO  
MUCH  
LEFT...

THE NUMBER OF  
QUESTIONS CALLS  
FOR SUSTAINED  
CONCENTRATION  
FOR THE  
ENTIRE THREE  
DAYS.

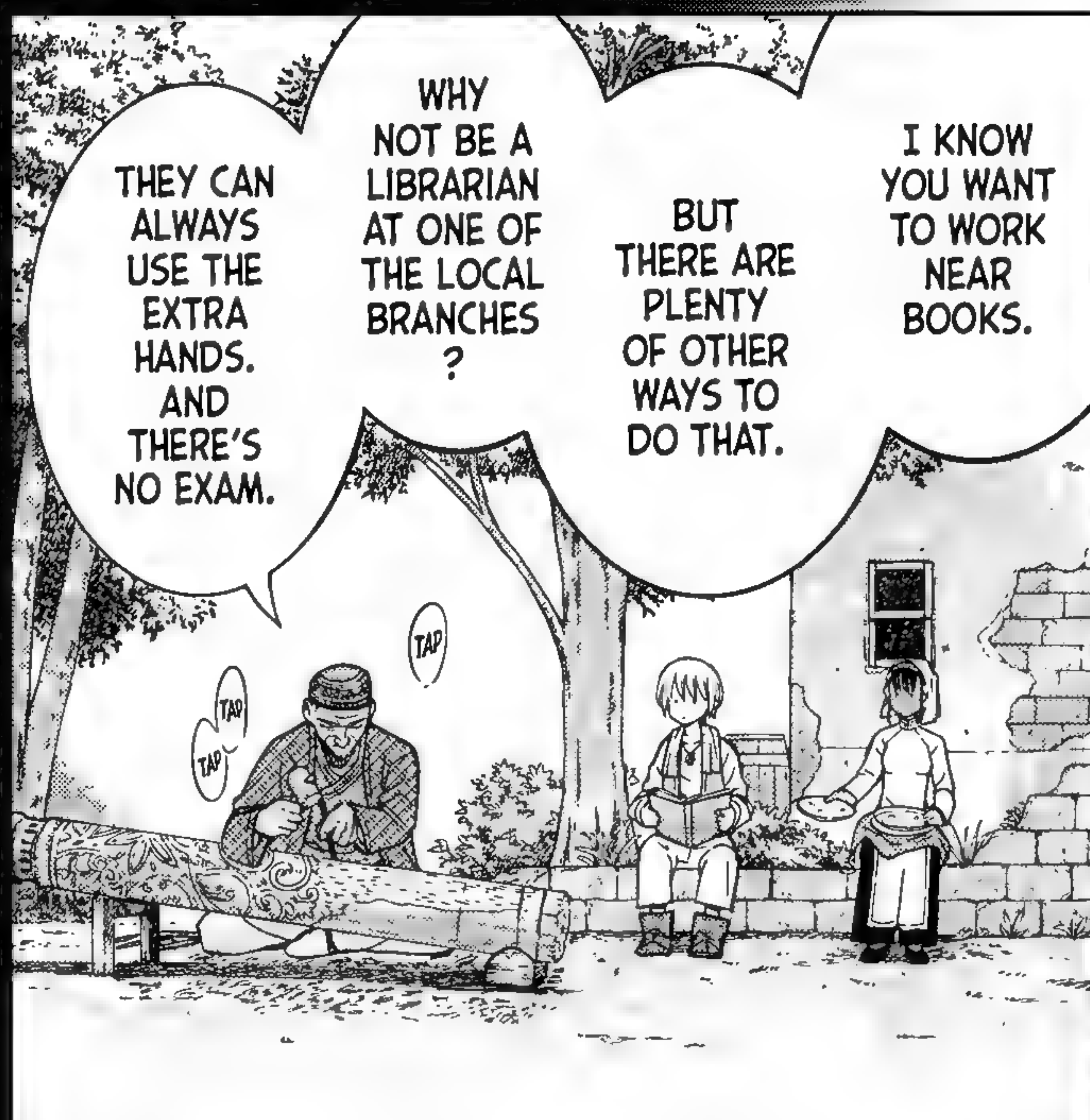
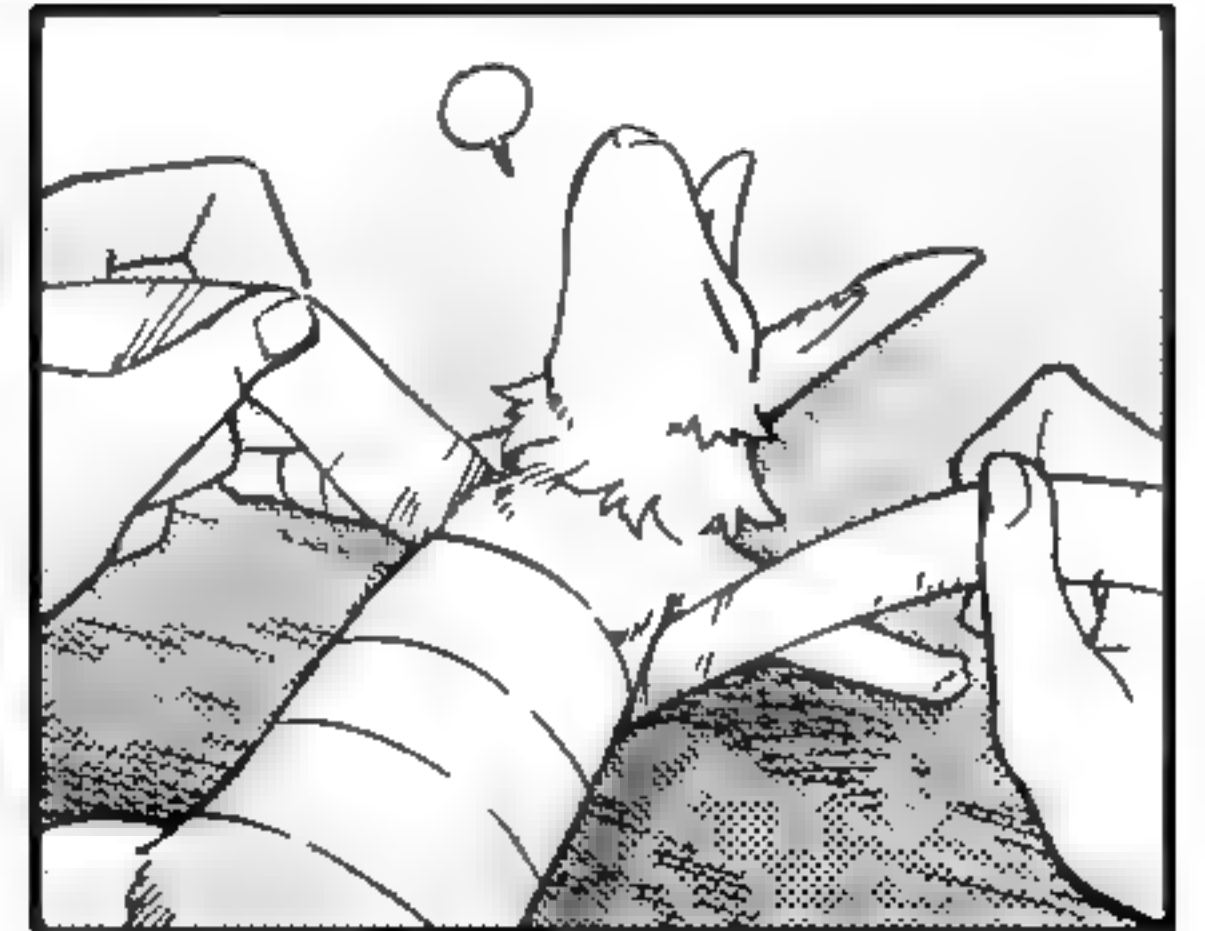
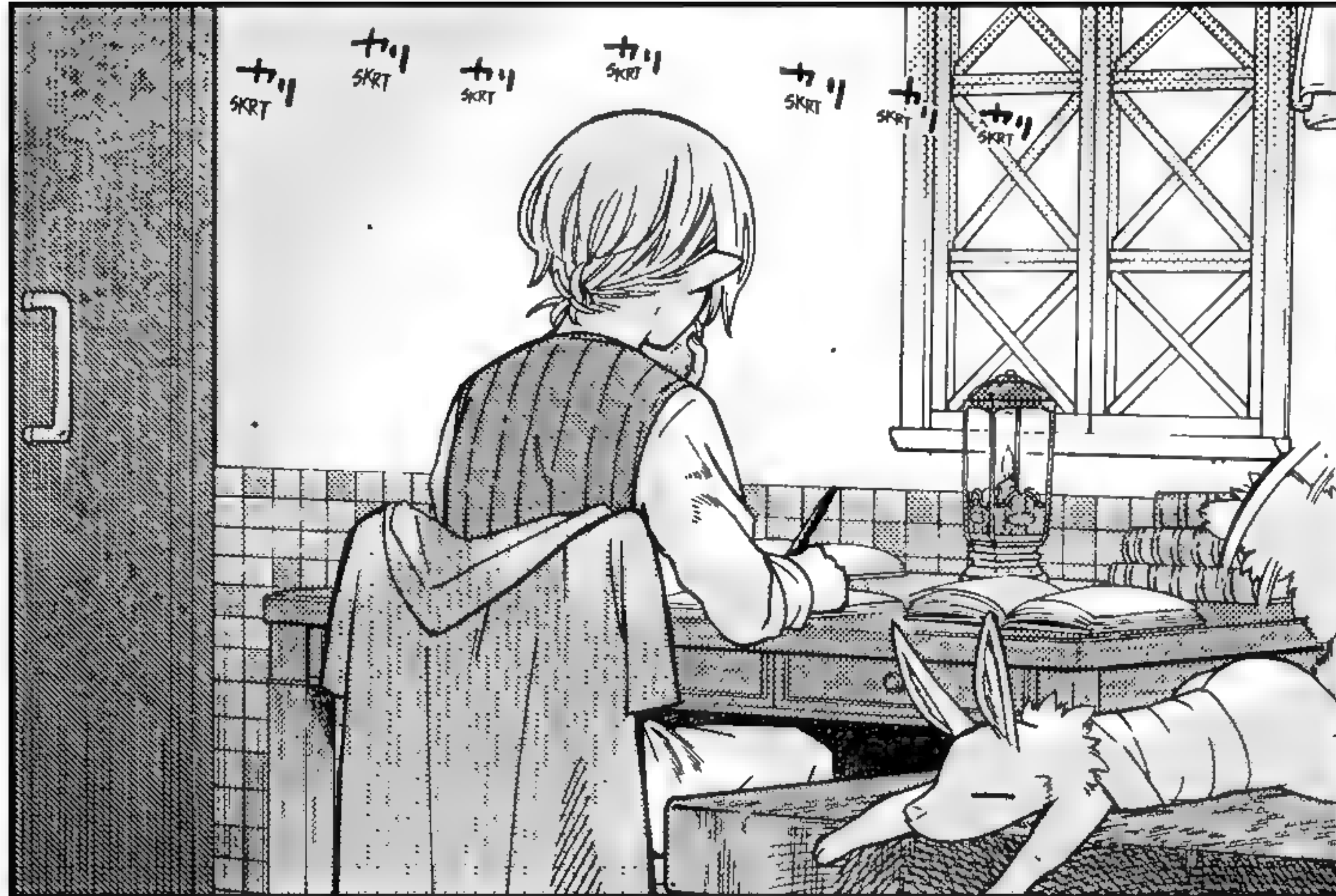
THE SHEER  
QUANTITY  
DEMANDS THREE  
DAYS' WORTH  
OF CAREFUL  
STRATEGY FROM  
THE EXAMINEES.

SLEEP IS  
INEVITABLE,  
BUT SWEET  
WILL BE NO  
SLUMBER HERE.  
WITH EYES CLOSED,  
THE TERRORS OF  
THE TEST WILL  
HAUNT THEM  
YET.





The Second Day







THINK OF THE JOY YOU'D GET FROM SHARING YOUR VERY OWN WORLD.

AS A MAN, YOU CAN BE A NOVELIST.



TAP  
TAP  
THAT WAY, YOU MIGHT GET TO LEAVE YOUR MARK ON HISTORY. AND YOU'D BUILD A COMFORTABLE FORTUNE DOIN' IT.

OR IF YOU'VE GOT WHAT IT TAKES TO STUDY, BE A SCHOLAR.



IN MOST CASES, KAFNA WORK BEHIND THE SCENES. THEY DON'T GET THE ATTENTION THAT SCHOLARS OR NOVELISTS DO.

*The pay's bad, too.*

BUT ONLY THE FEW KAFNA WHO BECOME SAGES HAVE ANY SWAY OVER THE CONTINENTAL GOVERNMENT.

IT WIELDS COMPLETE AUTHORITY OVER THE WRITTEN WORD, AND IT'LL NEVER HAVE TO WORRY ABOUT INTERFERENCE FROM OTHER REGIONS.

THE CENTRAL LIBRARY'S QUITE AN ORGANIZATION. I'LL GIVE YOU THAT.



FRANKLY, FOR MEN, TRYIN' TO BE A KAFNA'S JUST NOT WORTH THE EFFORT.

TAP  
TAP  
BUT COMPETITION TO BECOME ONE'S STILL FIERCE, WITH GIRLS COMING FROM ALL OVER TO TAKE THE EXAM.



...NO. NOT REALLY.



I BET THEO'S GOT A DREAM! SOMETHING HE'LL ONLY BE ABLE TO DO AS A KAFNA. RIGHT?



I JUST WONDER WHY YOU'RE GOING OUT OF YOUR WAY TO BE A KAFNA.

I DO ADMIRE THE WORK YOU PUT IN.





I WAS SO IMPRESSED BY THE FIRST PERSON WHO EVER LENT ME A BOOK. IT WAS A KAFNA.

EVER SINCE THEN, I'VE ADMIRERD THEM.

I STILL DON'T REALLY UNDERSTAND WHAT KIND OF JOB IT IS.

AND I DON'T HAVE ANY CLEAR VISION OF HOW I'LL FIT INTO SOCIETY WHEN I GROW UP

YOU JUST WHAT ?

I JUST ...



TH-THANKS, SAKIYA.

YOU'RE WORKING JUST AS HARD AS ANY OF THEM!

OF COURSE NOT!

...

YOU ADMIRE 'EM. THAT'S ALL, HUH?

...

IS THAT A SILLY REASON? IS IT DISRESPECTFUL OF ME TO TRY WHEN THERE ARE OTHERS OUT THERE WITH A CLEARER GOAL?







...UNTIL  
SOMETHING  
HAPPENED  
THAT  
PROMPTED  
'EM TO  
GROW  
WINGS.

FOR EONS,  
BIRDS HAD  
NO WINGS.  
THEY RAN ON  
THE GROUND  
JUST LIKE  
OTHER  
ANIMALS  
...



?

DO YOU  
KNOW WHAT  
PROMPTED  
THE FIRST  
BIRDS TO  
TRY FLYING  
THROUGH  
THE SKY?



WHAT'S  
IMPORTANT  
IS THAT YOU  
DON'T CLING  
TO ONE AND  
REFUSE TO  
LISTEN TO  
OTHERS.  
*Anyway, to  
continue...*

SOME  
PEOPLE  
BELIEVE  
SO.  
  
THE  
WORLD IS  
FILLED WITH  
COUNTLESS  
IDEAS.



BUT DIDN'T  
OUR FATHER  
IN HEAVEN  
CREATE THEM  
JUST THE  
WAY THEY  
ARE NOW?



WOOOO..

HOW LOVELY!



THAT  
LONGING  
TOOK  
SHAPE.

AND THE  
ANIMAL  
FOUND  
ITSELF  
WITH A  
PAIR OF  
WINGS.



ONE OF  
THOSE  
ANCIENT,  
WINGLESS  
BIRDS  
STARED  
UP AT  
THE VAST,  
EMPTY  
BLUE SKY  
ONE DAY...

...AND  
LONGED  
TO SOAR  
TO ITS  
HEART'S  
CONTENT.



JUST KIDDING.  
OF COURSE  
THAT'S NOT HOW  
IT HAPPENED.  
*At least,  
not if you  
ask me.*





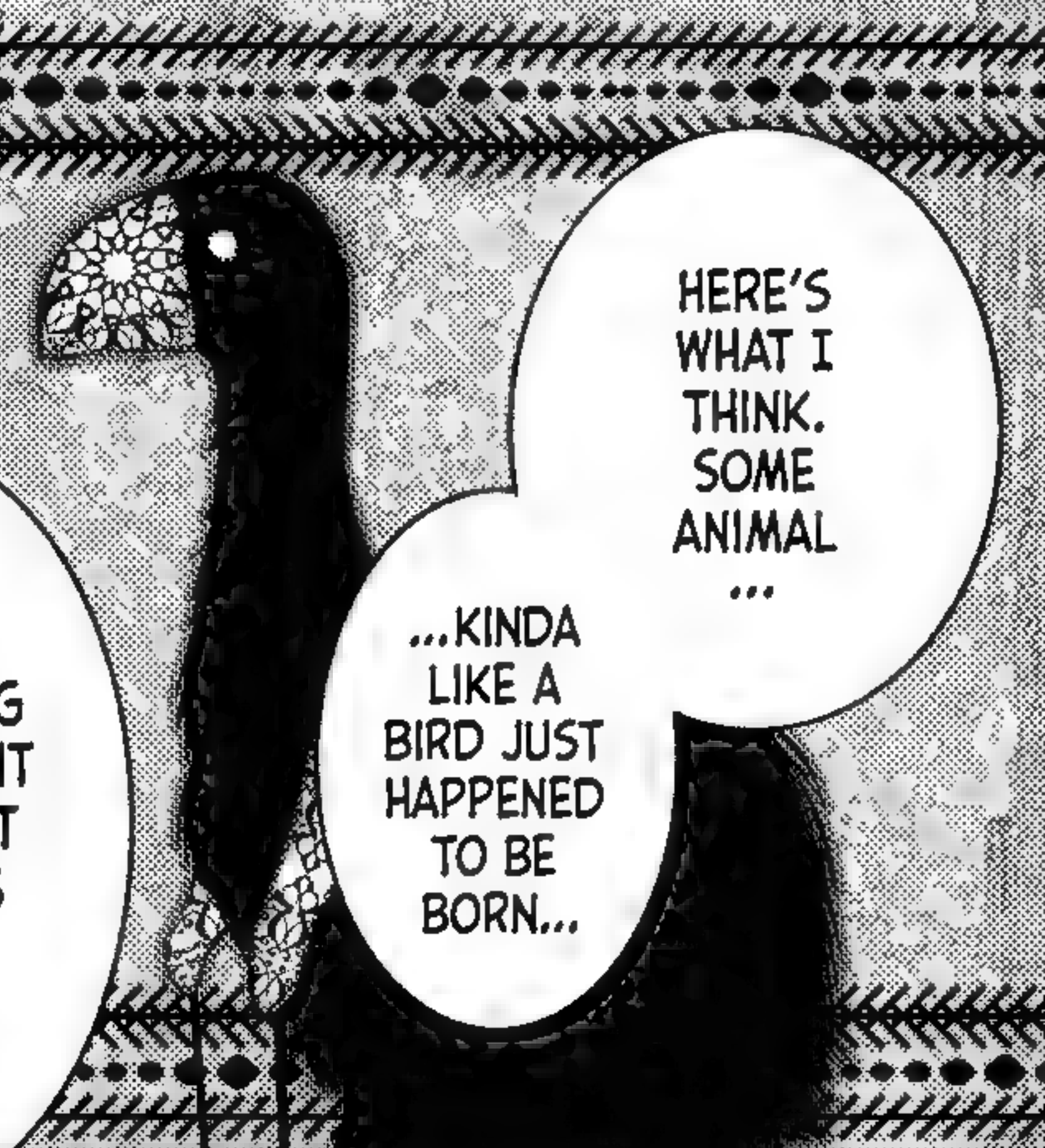
ON ITS  
HANDS  
...

...IT HAD  
A BUMP.  
A LITTLE  
SOMETHIN'  
EXTRA.

...OR  
ELBOWS,  
OR SOME-  
WHERE...



...LOOKING  
A LITTLE BIT  
DIFFERENT  
FROM ITS  
PEERS.



HERE'S  
WHAT I  
THINK.  
SOME  
ANIMAL  
...

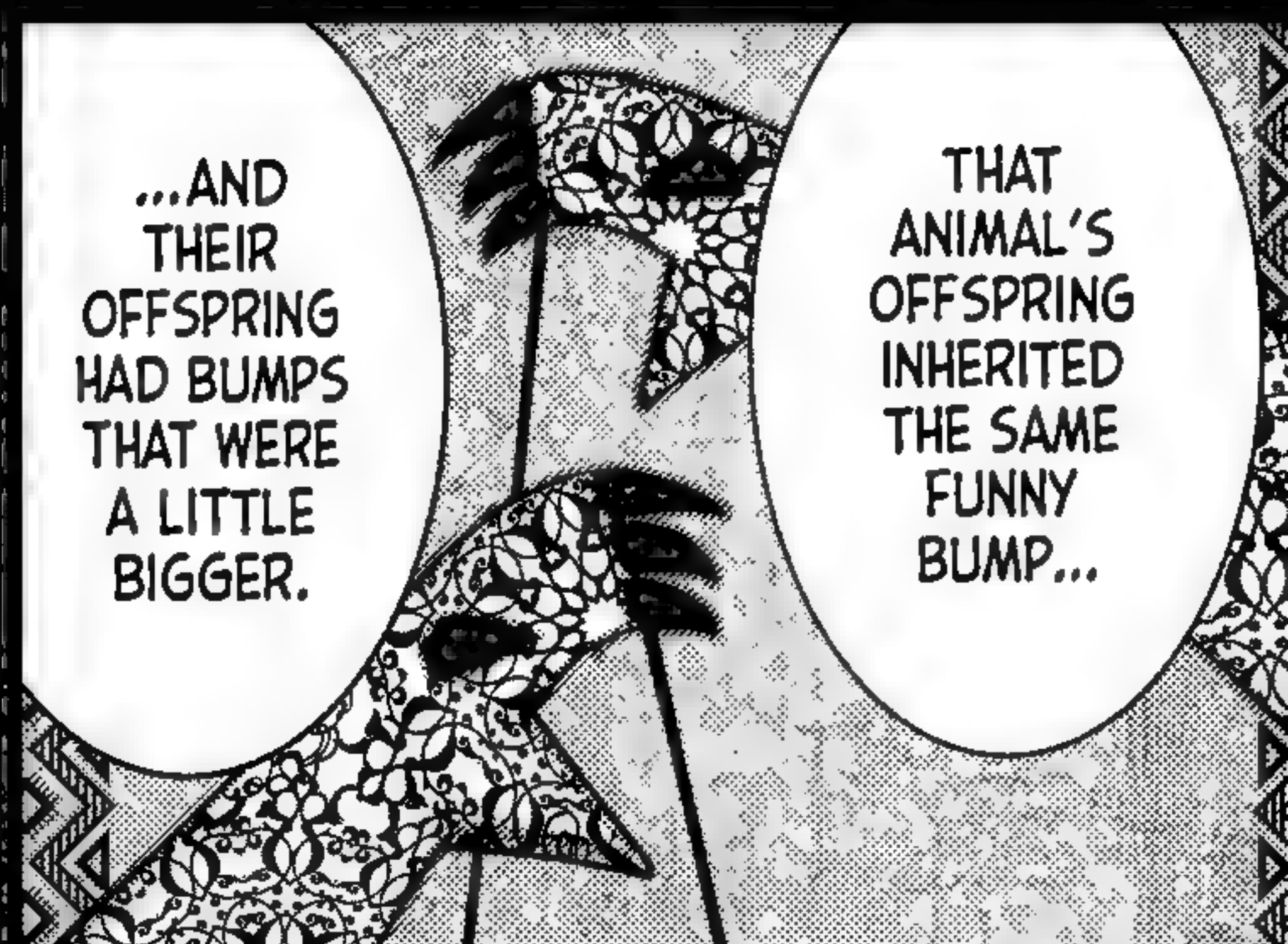
...KINDA  
LIKE A  
BIRD JUST  
HAPPENED  
TO BE  
BORN...



...AND A  
LARGER  
BODY MAKES  
YOU APPEAR  
STRONG  
AND MORE  
ATTRACTIVE  
TO FEMALES.

A BODY  
WITH MORE  
SURFACE AREA  
CAN REGULATE  
ITS TEMPERA-  
TURE MORE  
EFFICIENTLY  
...

IN THE WILD,  
BEING A BIT  
LARGER THAN  
OTHERS IS AN  
ADVANTAGE.



...AND  
THEIR  
OFFSPRING  
HAD BUMPS  
THAT WERE  
A LITTLE  
BIGGER.

THAT  
ANIMAL'S  
OFFSPRING  
INHERITED  
THE SAME  
FUNNY  
BUMP...

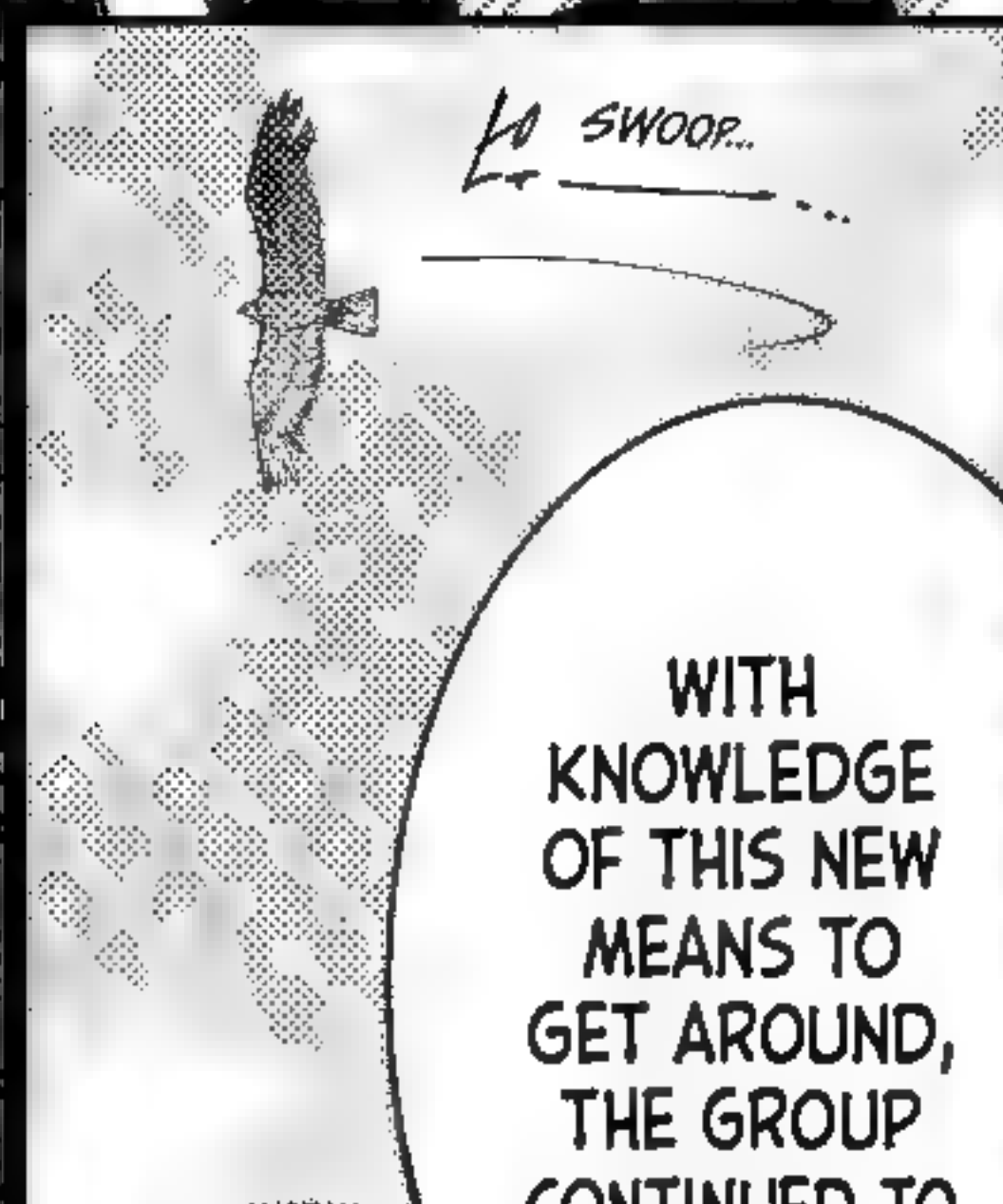


ONE GROUP OF  
DESCENDANTS WAS  
LUCKY ENOUGH TO  
SURVIVE AND FLOURISH,  
AND WITH EACH  
GENERATION,  
THE BUMP GREW  
LARGER.



THEY DIDN'T  
BEGIN FLYING  
BECAUSE OF  
SOME DREAM  
OR GOAL.

PURE  
HAPPEN-  
STANCE.  
NOTHING  
MORE.



WITH  
KNOWLEDGE  
OF THIS NEW  
MEANS TO  
GET AROUND,  
THE GROUP  
CONTINUED TO  
FLOURISH...



LISTEN,  
THEO...

...UNTIL  
EVENTUALLY  
THOSE  
OVERSIZED  
BUMPS HAD  
COME TO  
RESEMBLE  
SOMETHING  
LIKE WINGS.




AND ONE DAY,  
ONE OF THEM  
HAPPENED TO  
FALL FROM  
SOMEWHERE  
HIGH.

ITS  
OVERSIZED  
APPENDAGES  
CAUGHT  
THE WIND,  
LETTING IT  
GLIDE SAFELY  
DOWN.





...BUT  
MAYBE  
THAT LITTLE  
SOMETHIN'  
EXTRA YOU  
GOT WHEN  
YOU MET  
THE KAFNA  
...



...THAT  
SPARK OF  
ADMIRATION  
YOU FELT?

THAT'S THE  
GREATEST  
SOMETHIN'  
EXTRA  
THERE IS.

...WILL  
GROW INTO  
A SET OF  
WINGS BIG  
ENOUGH TO  
ALTER THE  
CURRENTS  
OF THE  
WORLD.



THE  
FUTURE  
MIGHT  
NOT SEEM  
CLEAR YET.

AND  
I'M  
NOT  
SAYING  
...

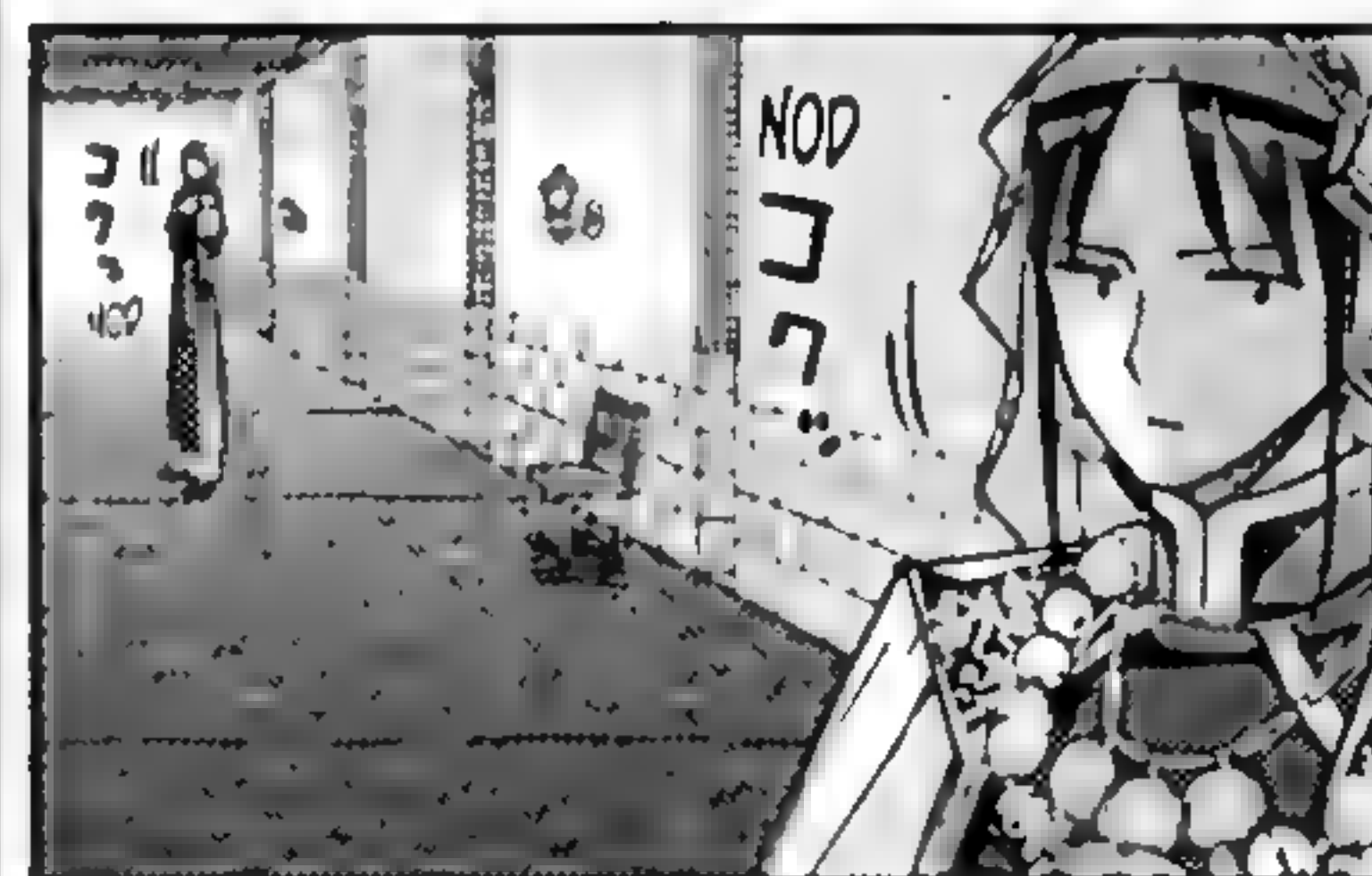
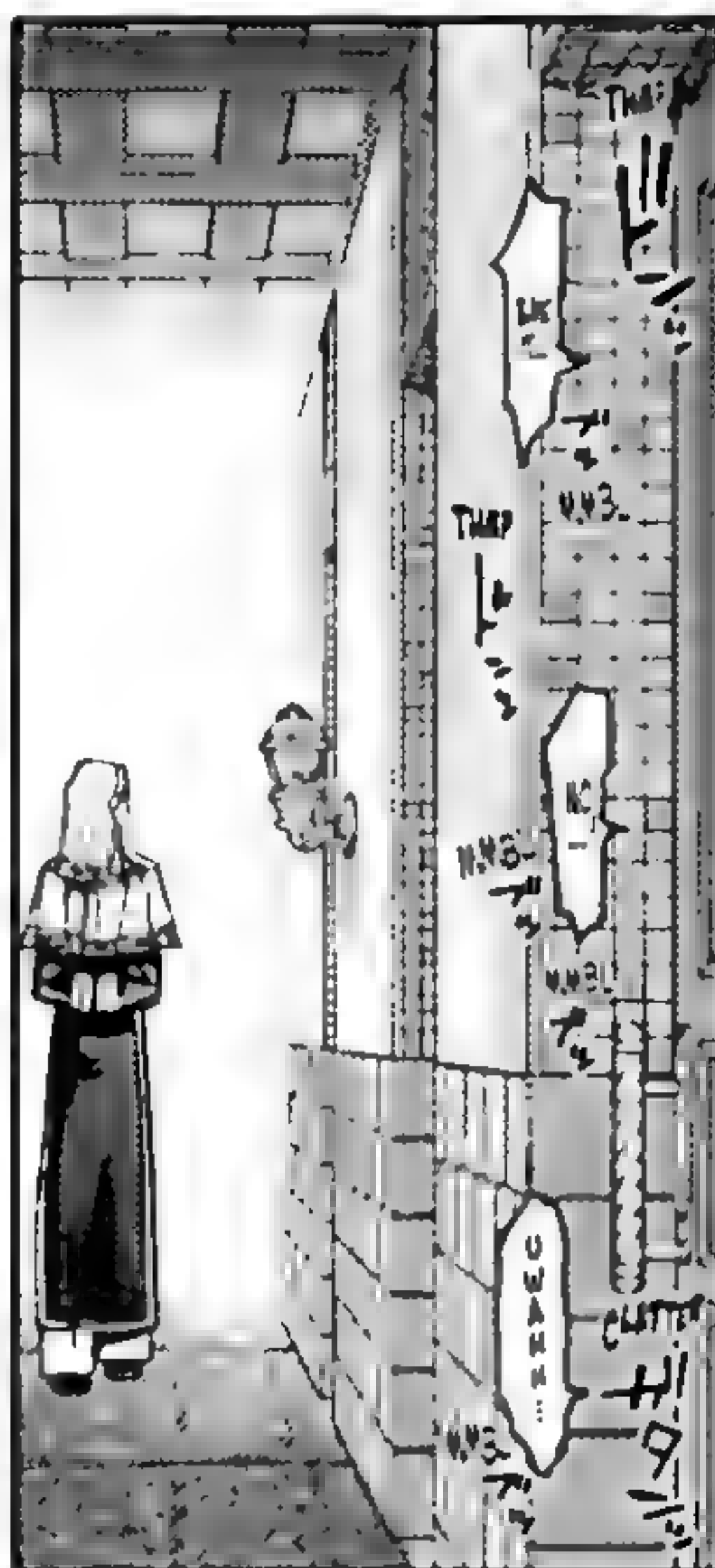
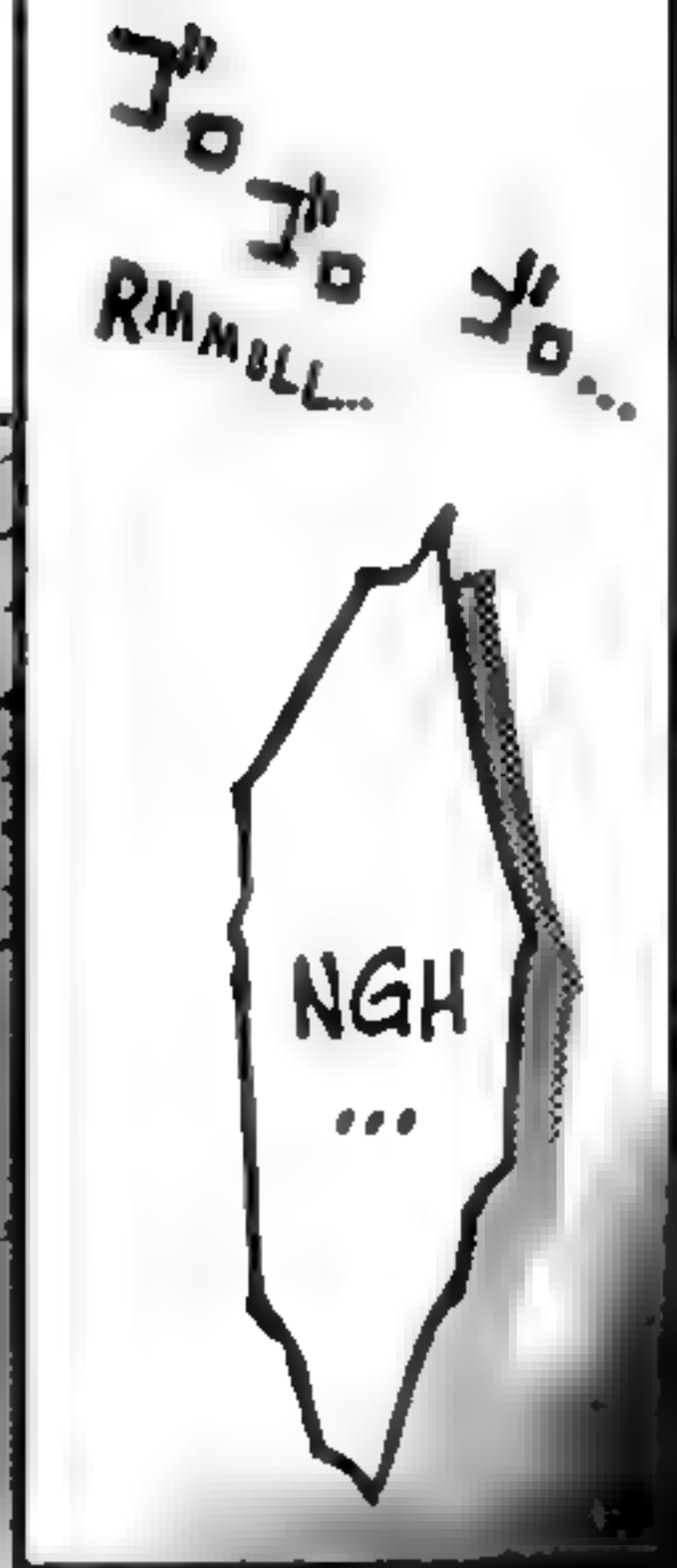
...SAYING  
ITS GONNA  
HAPPEN  
FOR SURE  
...



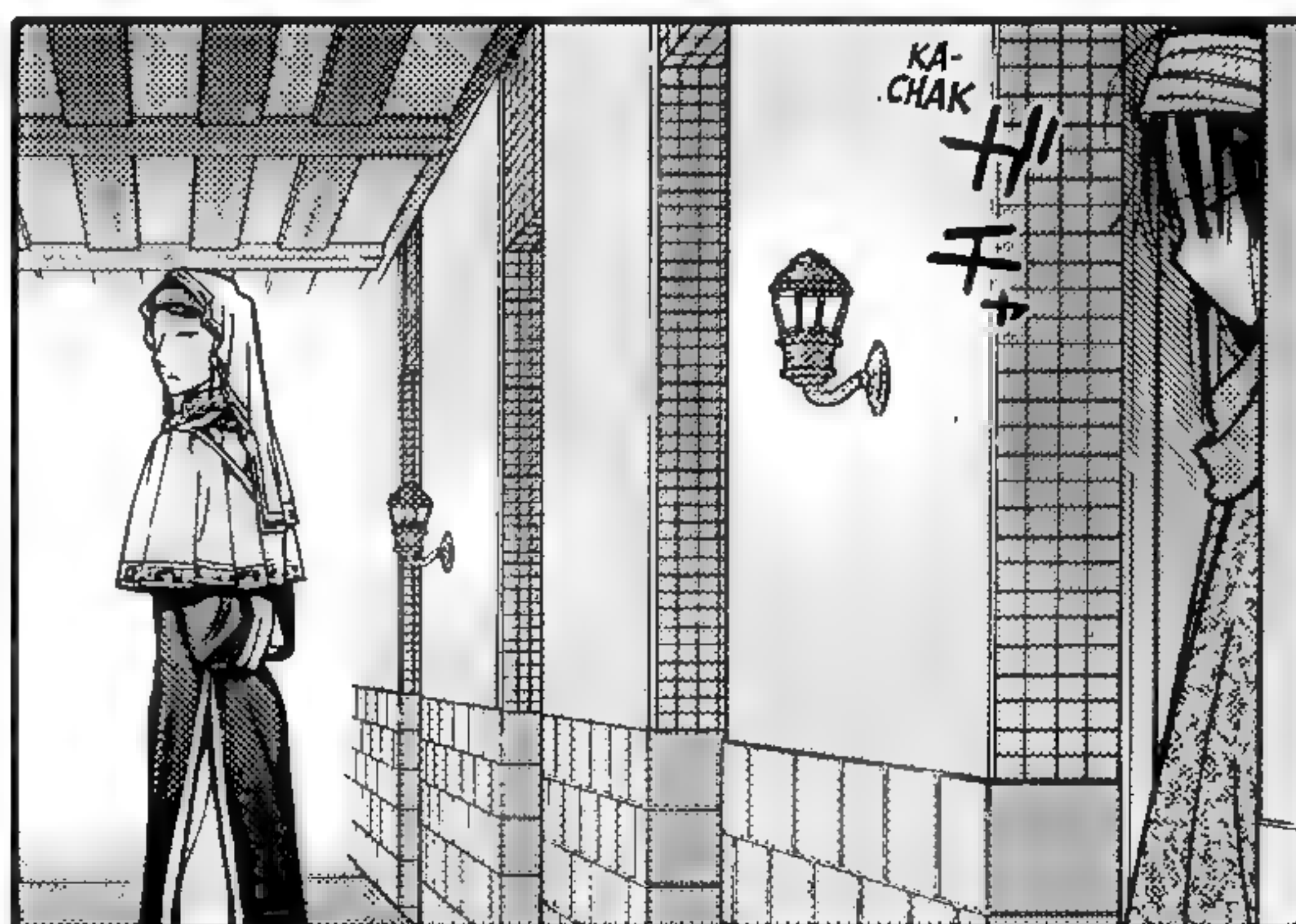
*The Third Day*







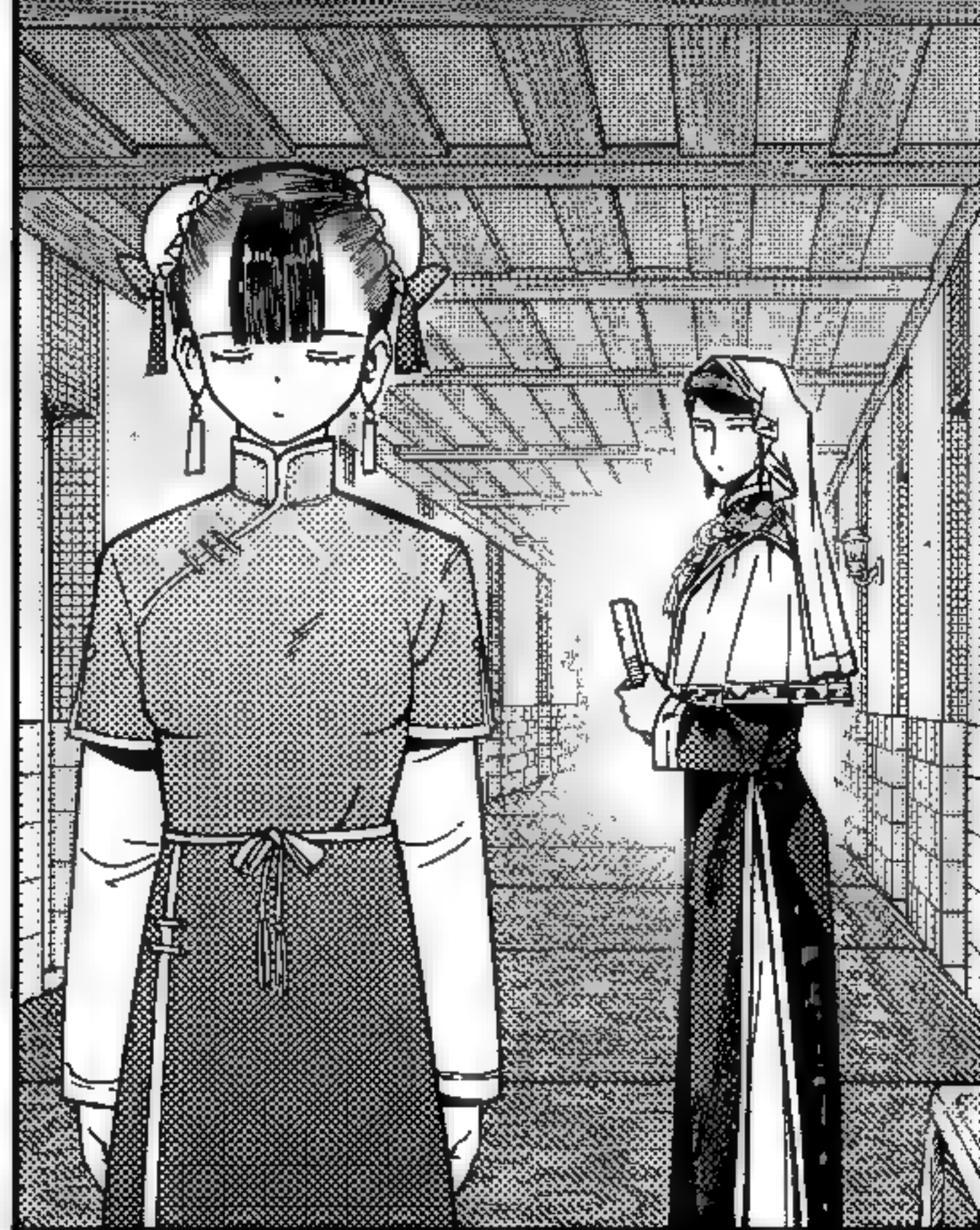












HAVE  
YOU  
SLEPT  
?

THERE'S  
STILL A  
FULL DAY  
LEFT.

YES.  
I'M FULLY  
RESTED.

I  
SEE.

I'M FINE  
WITHOUT IT.  
I'D LIKE  
TO TOUR  
THE LIBRARY  
BEFORE THE  
NEXT STAGE.



MY  
APOLO-  
GIES.



THE  
STAIRWAY  
IS AT THE  
OTHER END  
OF THE  
HALL.



IT'S NOT  
A RACE,  
YOU  
KNOW.

JUST  
TRYING TO  
CHALLENGE  
MYSELF.



ARE YOU  
FINISHED  
AS WELL  
?

YEAH.

YAWN



AWW,  
COME ON!  
I WASN'T  
FIRST?



Time for  
some  
sleep...





...to many of those who went on to become kafna, it felt like little more than an extension of daily life.

Though for typical children...

...the written stage was a massive ordeal...

In-deed ...



THE WRITTEN EXAM'S SIMPLE.

IT'S THE INTERVIEW I'M WORRIED ABOUT.

I COULD'VE BREEZED THROUGH THIS AFTER FIVE DAYS WITHOUT SLEEP.

YOU DON'T EVEN HAVE TO DELVE THAT DEEPLY INTO ANY SUBJECT.

HMPH. I THOUGHT THESE WERE SUPPOSED TO BE HARD.



I GUESS I'LL GO THROUGH THEM ONE LAST TIME.

JUST TO BE SAFE.

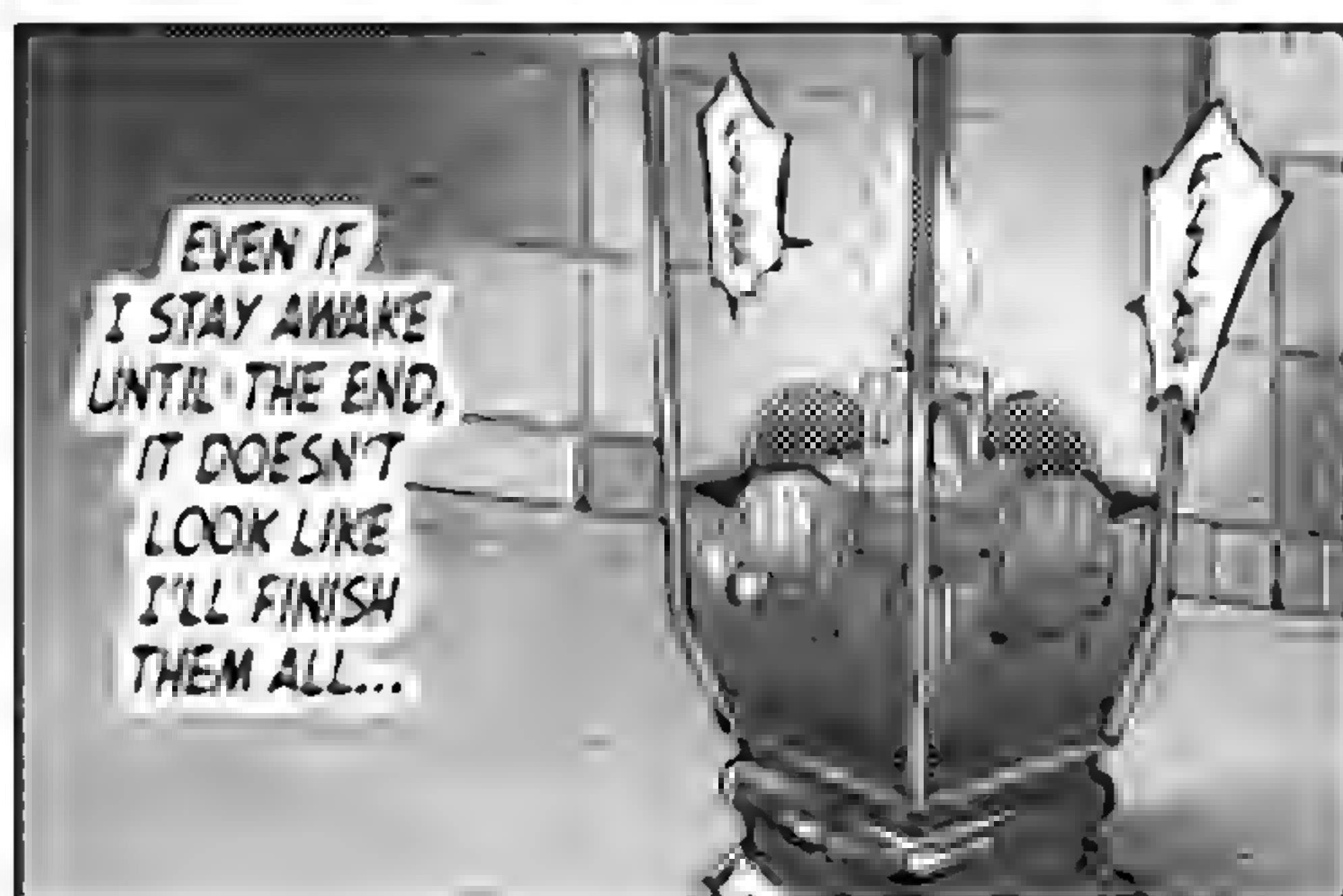
I'VE TRIPLE-CHECKED ALL MY ANSWERS.

Gleam...





Half a Day Remaining



EVEN IF  
I STAY AWAKE  
UNTIL THE END,  
IT DOESN'T  
LOOK LIKE  
I'LL FINISH  
THEM ALL...



1/31 BLUE  
...  
...



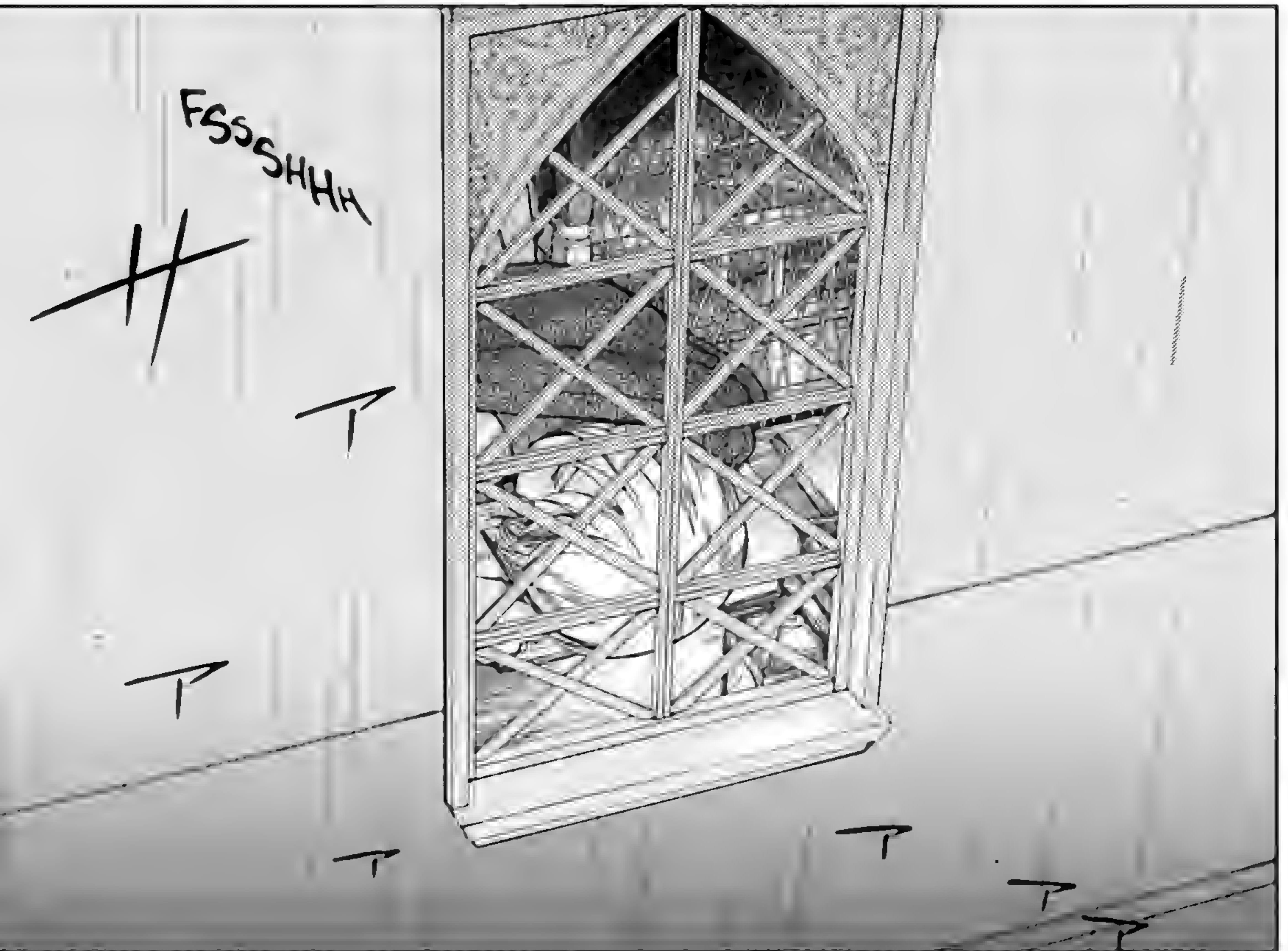
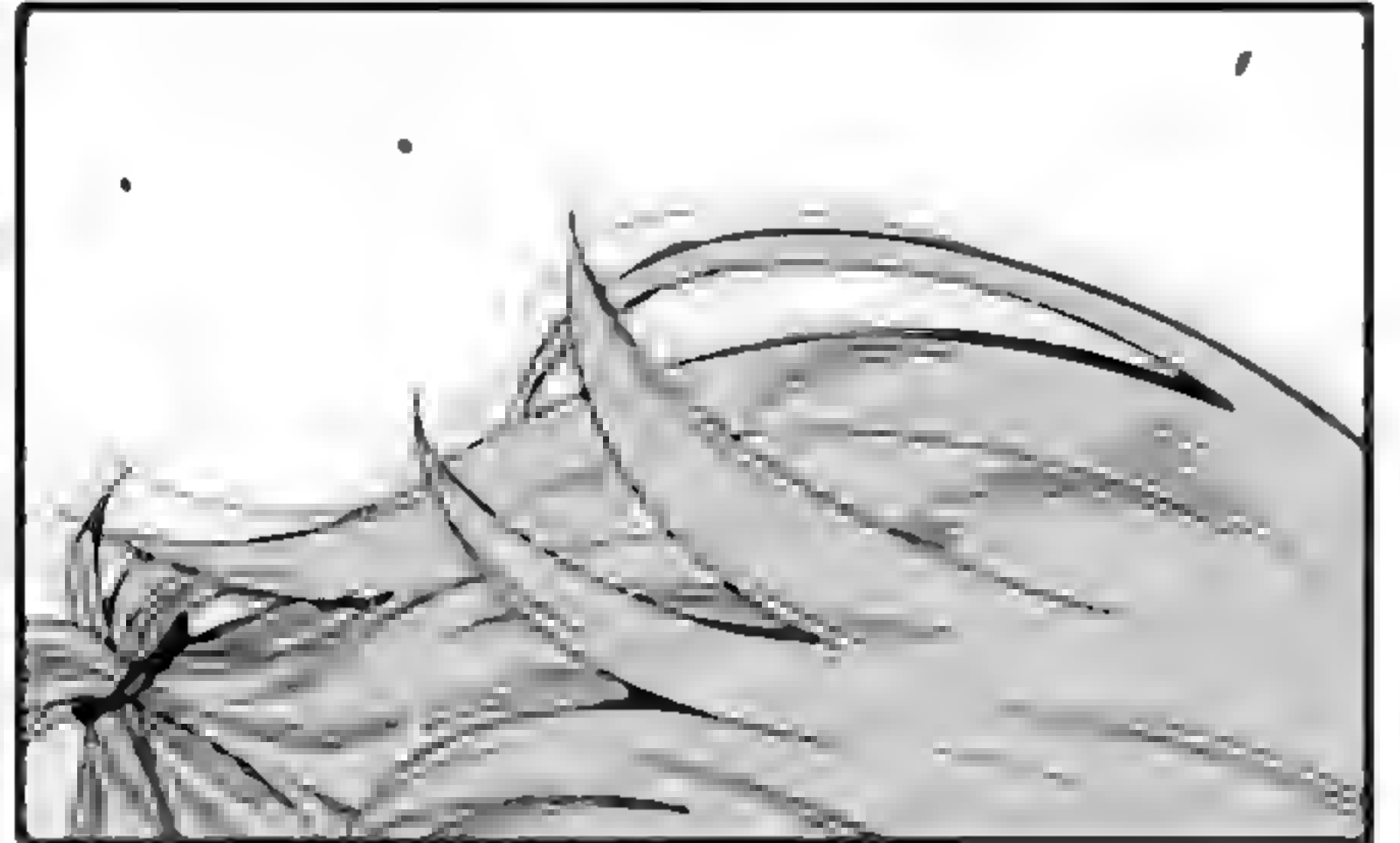
I FEEL SO  
SLEEPY...

EVEN  
ONE MORE  
QUESTION  
ANSWERED...

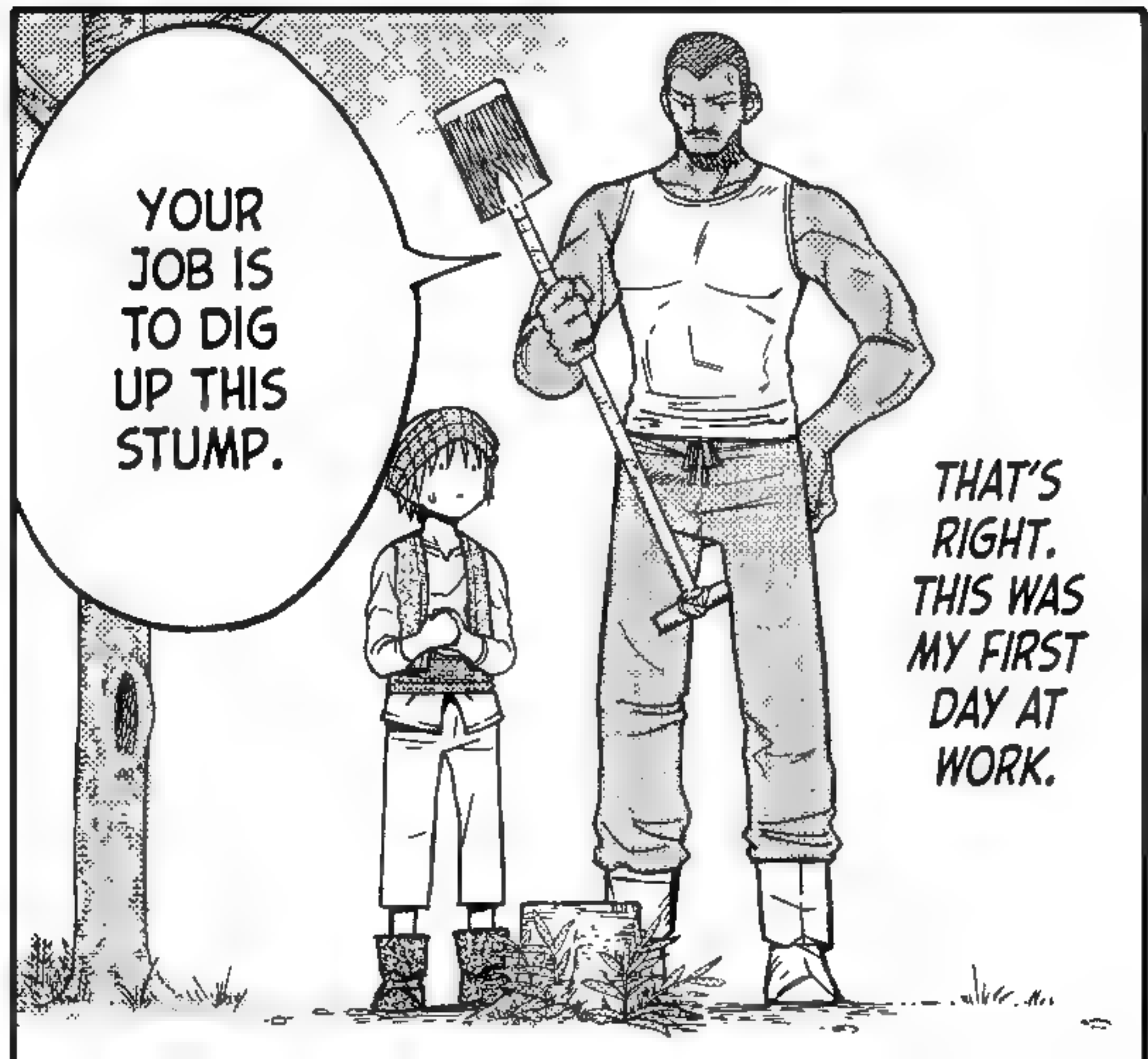
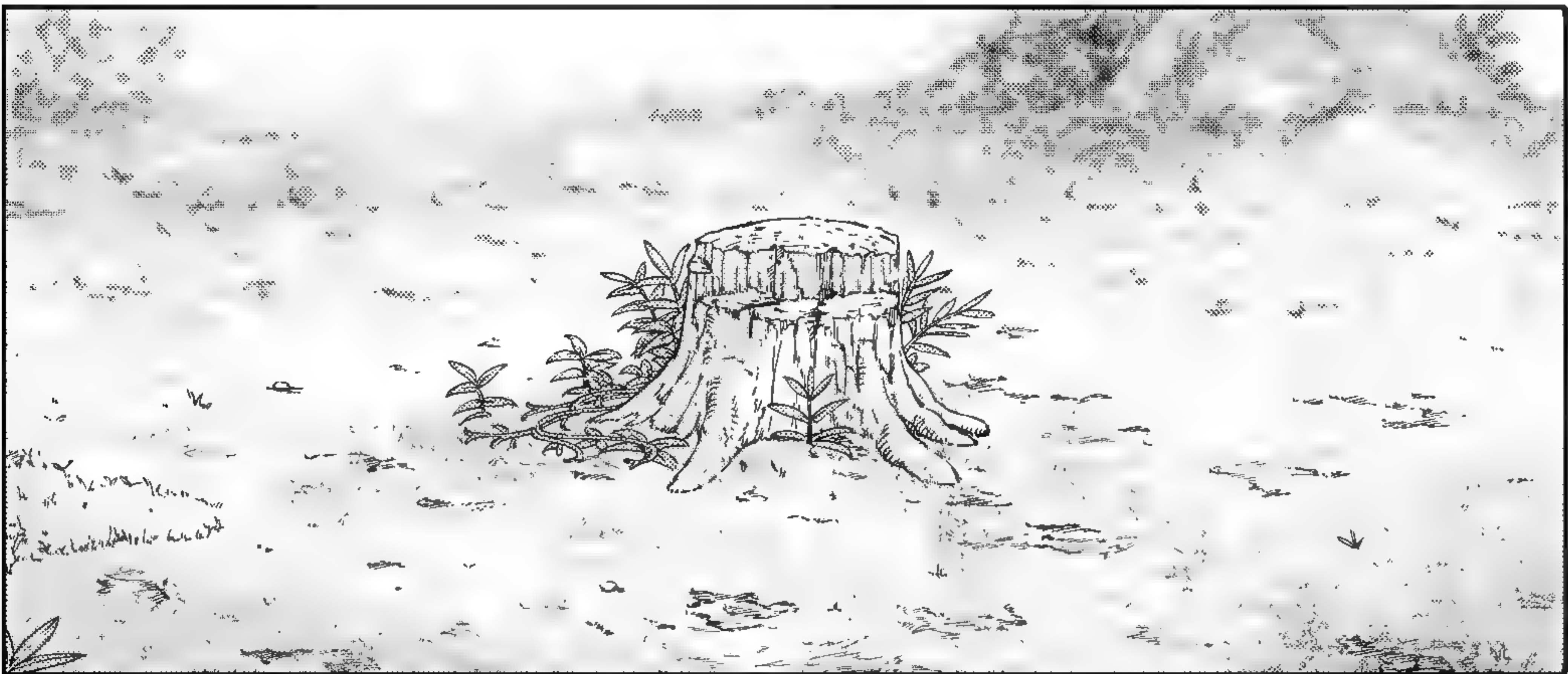
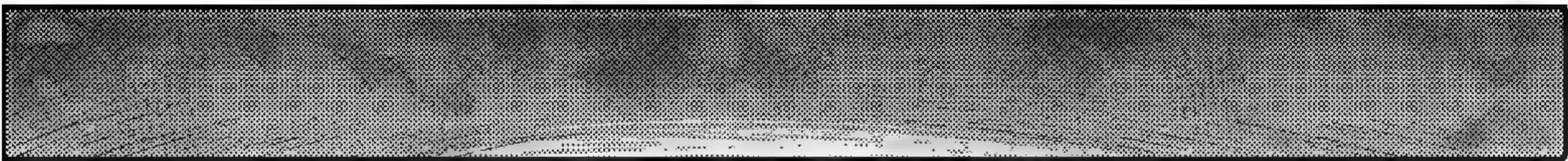
EVEN ONE  
MORE...

BUT IF I CAN  
MANAGE TO  
GET EVEN  
ONE MORE...

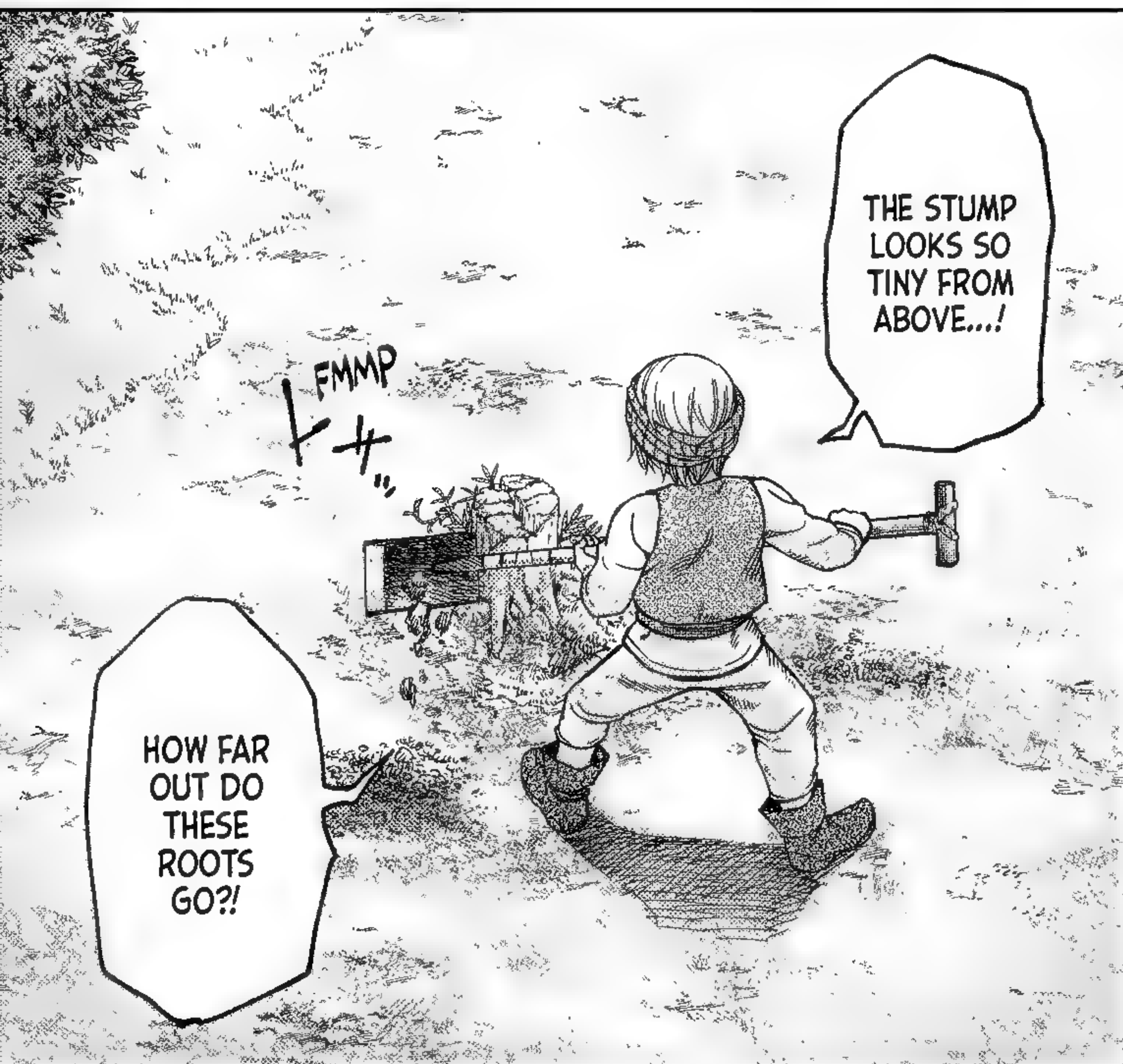












THE STUMP  
LOOKS SO  
TINY FROM  
ABOVE....!

HOW FAR  
OUT DO  
THESE  
ROOTS  
GO?!



IT  
KEEPS  
GOING  
!



IF THIS  
ISN'T  
ENOUGH  
TO FILL  
YOU UP,  
LET ME  
KNOW.

HERE.  
LUNCH.



WHEN  
YOU'VE GOT  
IT PLANTED  
IN THE GROUND,  
LEAN IT BACK  
LIKE A LEVER  
TO PRY IT UP.

YOU CAN'T  
RELY ON  
STRENGTH  
ALONE.

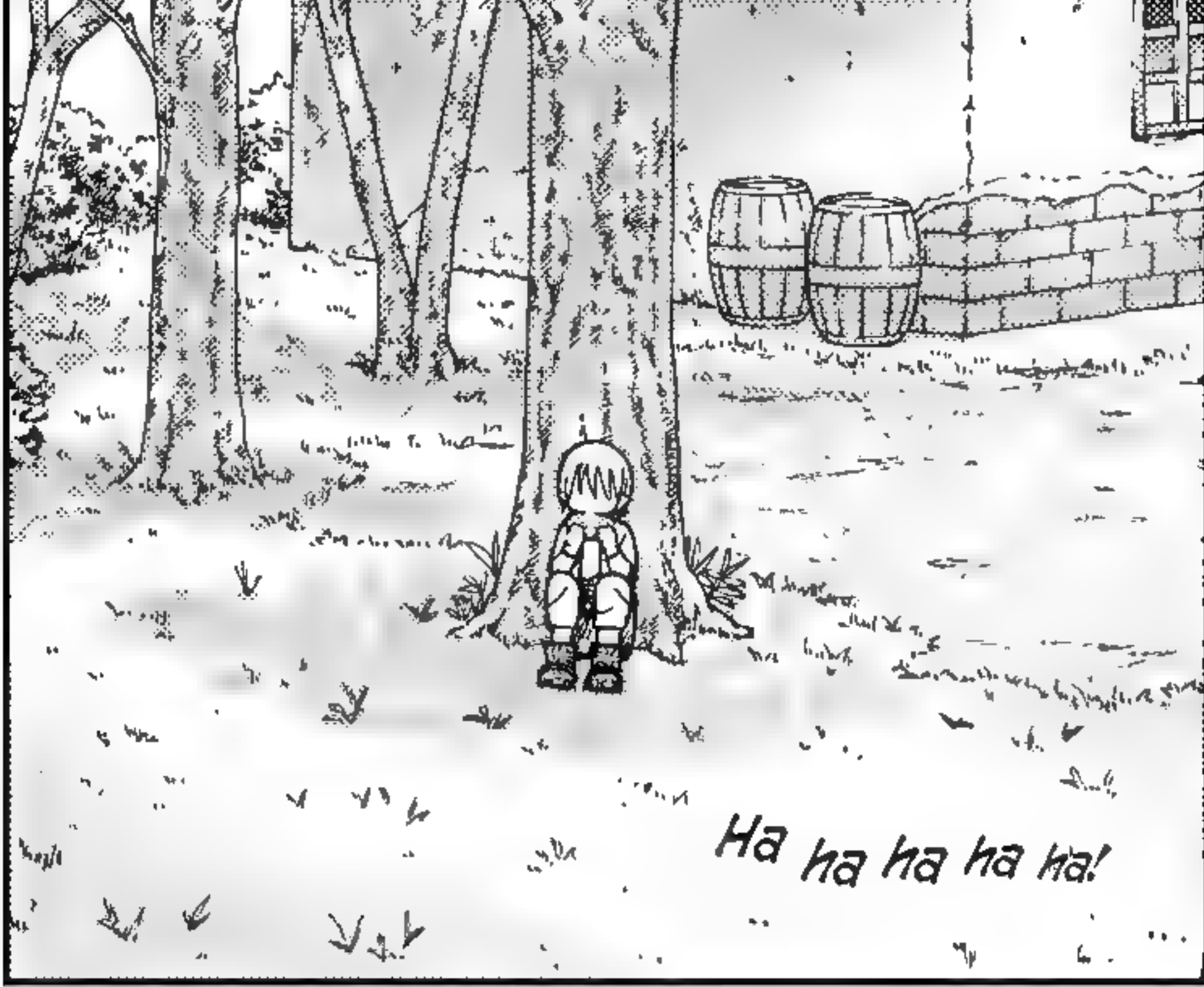
THE  
ROOTS  
AREN'T  
TOO THICK.  
A SPADE  
SHOULD BE  
ENOUGH TO  
SNAP 'EM.

SAWS CAN BE  
DANGEROUS,  
SO YOU GOTTA  
LEARN TO USE  
THIS FIRST.



AH!  
WORKIN'  
HARD,  
I SEE.





Ha ha ha ha ha!



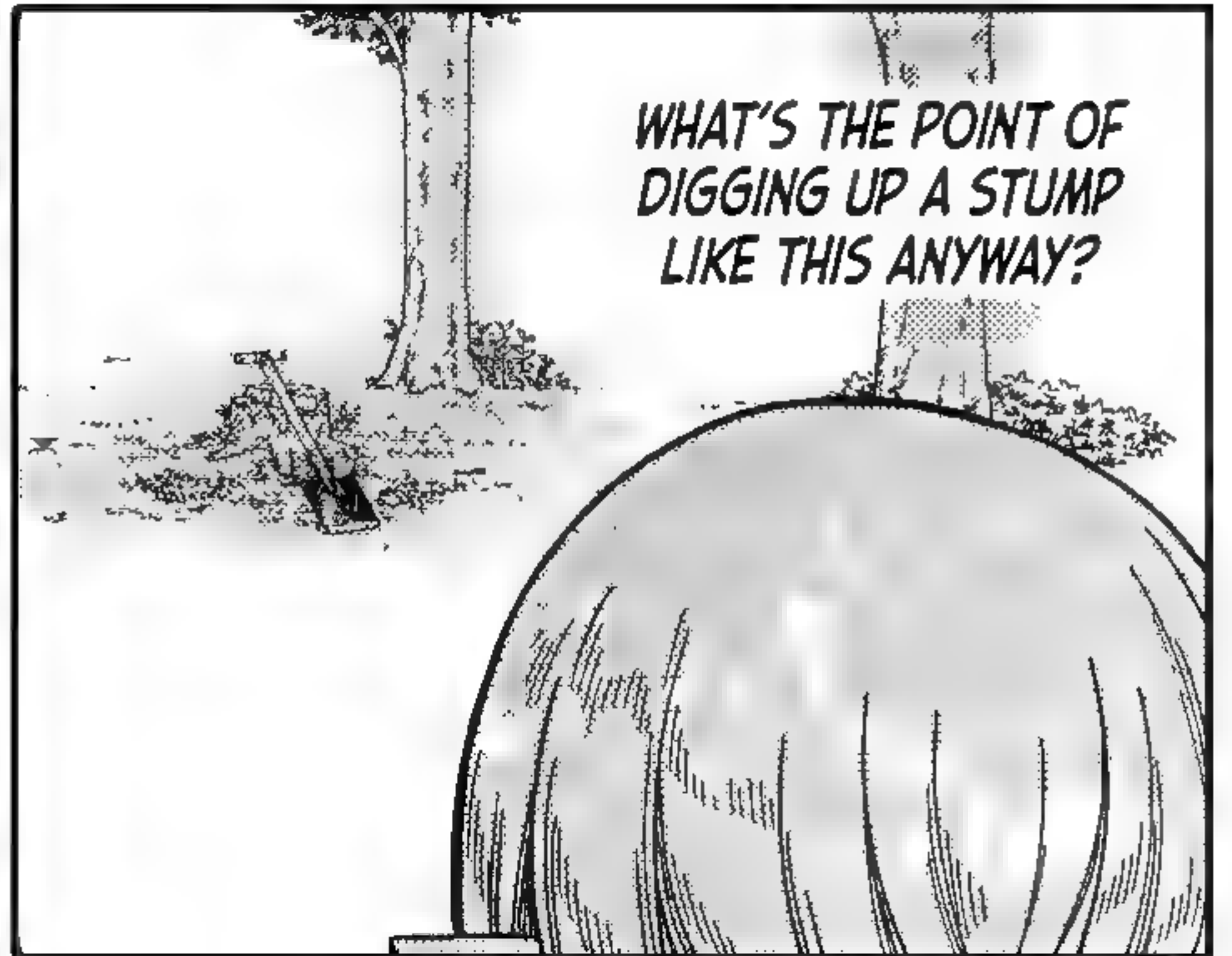
Haha  
haha!

Man,  
get a  
load  
of the  
kid.

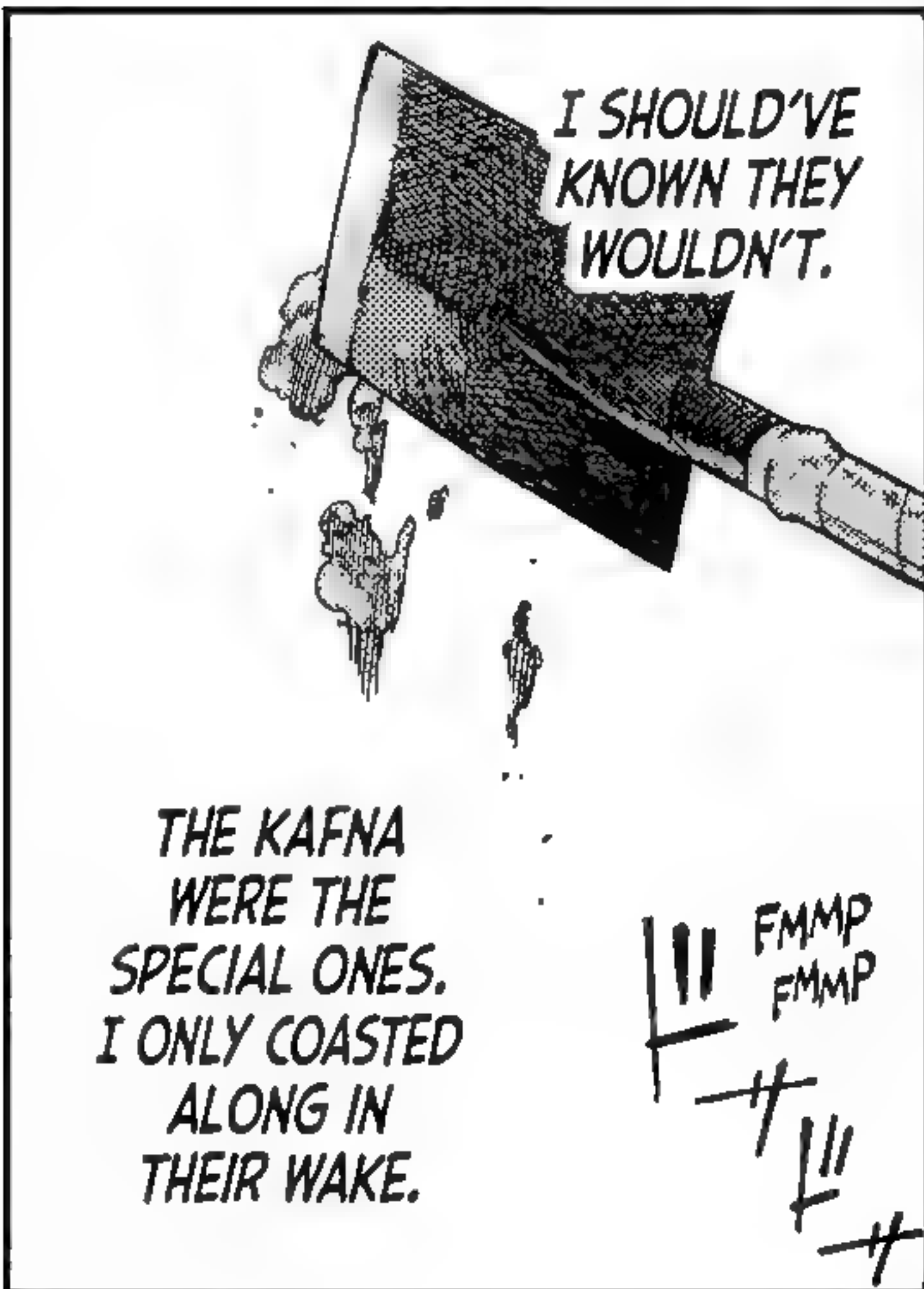


...SO  
NOBODY  
HAD TO  
WORK  
NEXT TO  
THE LONG-  
EARS!

THEY  
PROBABLY  
JUST  
ASSIGNED  
ME SOME  
MEAN-  
INGLESS  
TASK...



WHAT'S THE POINT OF  
DIGGING UP A STUMP  
LIKE THIS ANYWAY?



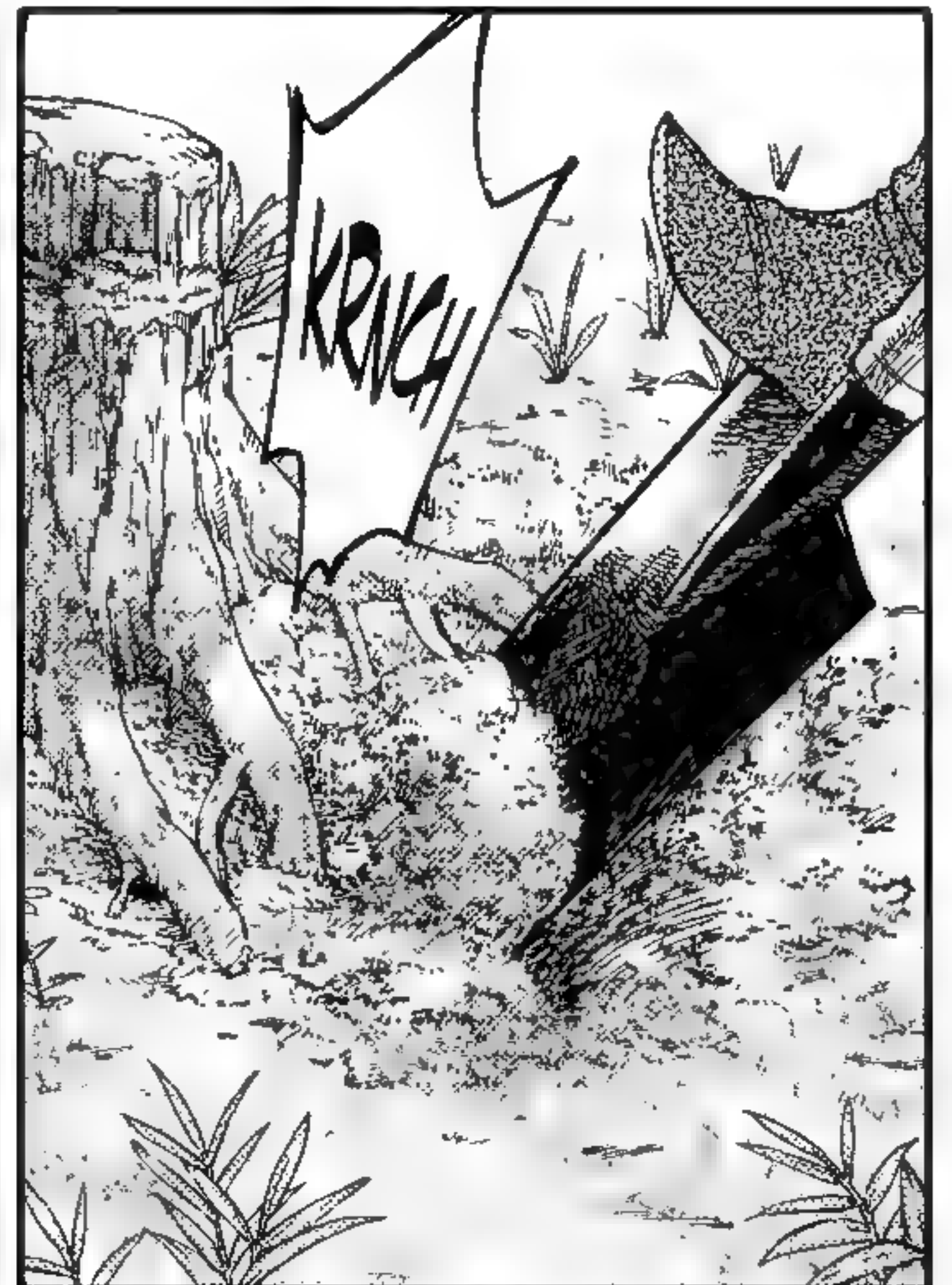
I SHOULD'VE  
KNOWN THEY  
WOULDN'T.

THE KAFNA  
WERE THE  
SPECIAL ONES.  
I ONLY COASTED  
ALONG IN  
THEIR WAKE.

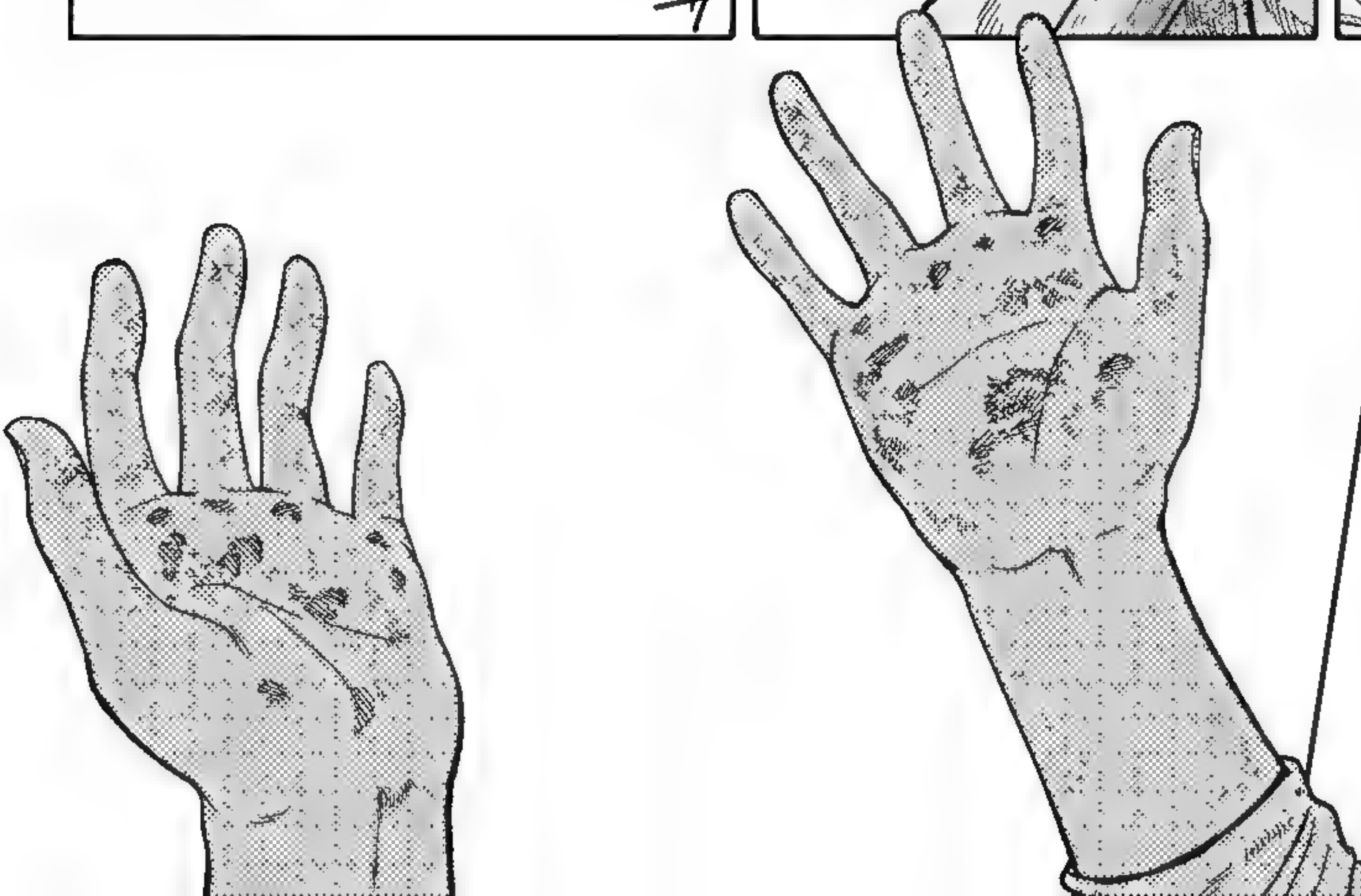
FMMP  
FMMP



AFTER I MET  
SEDONA, FOR A  
WHILE I THOUGHT  
THINGS MIGHT  
ACTUALLY  
CHANGE.



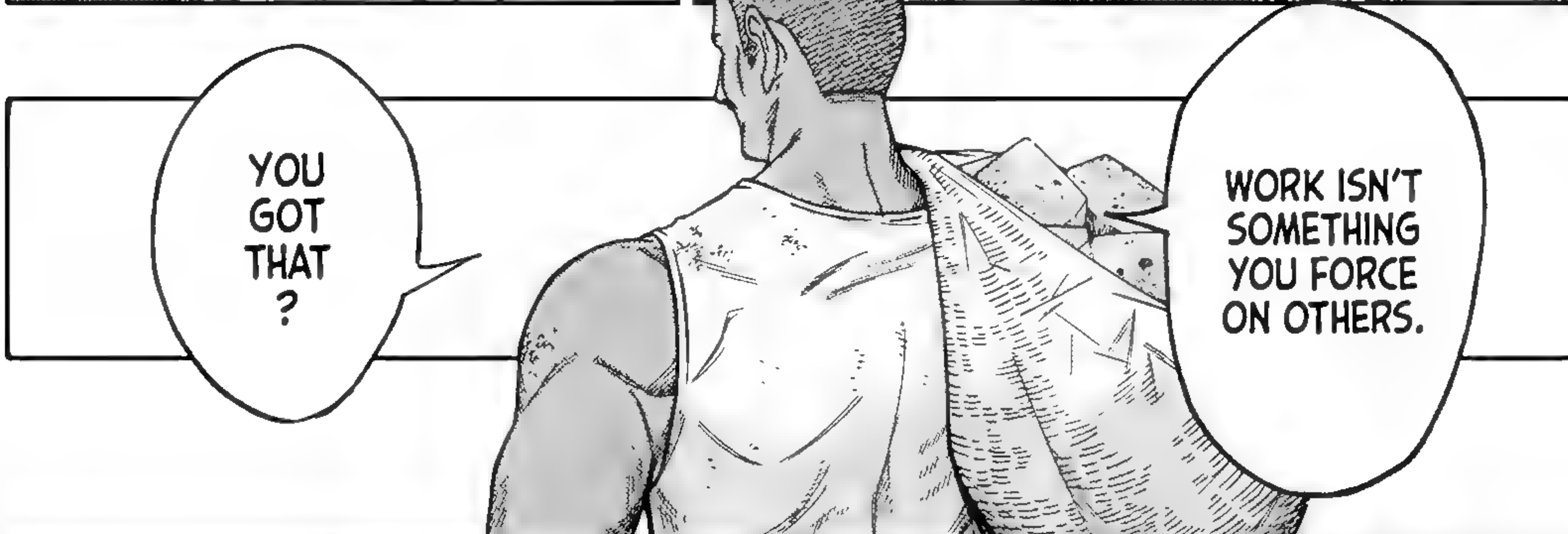
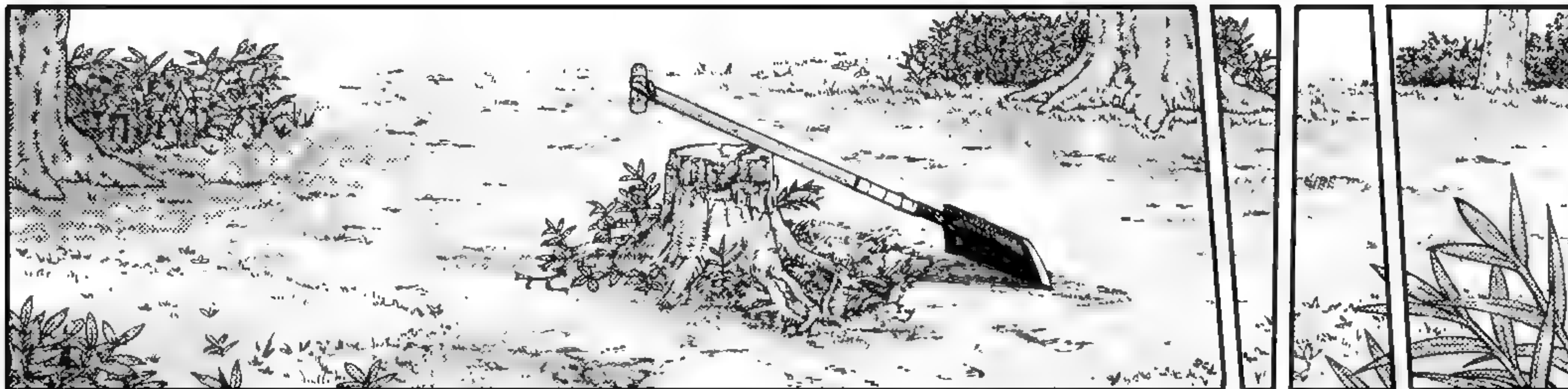
KRICH



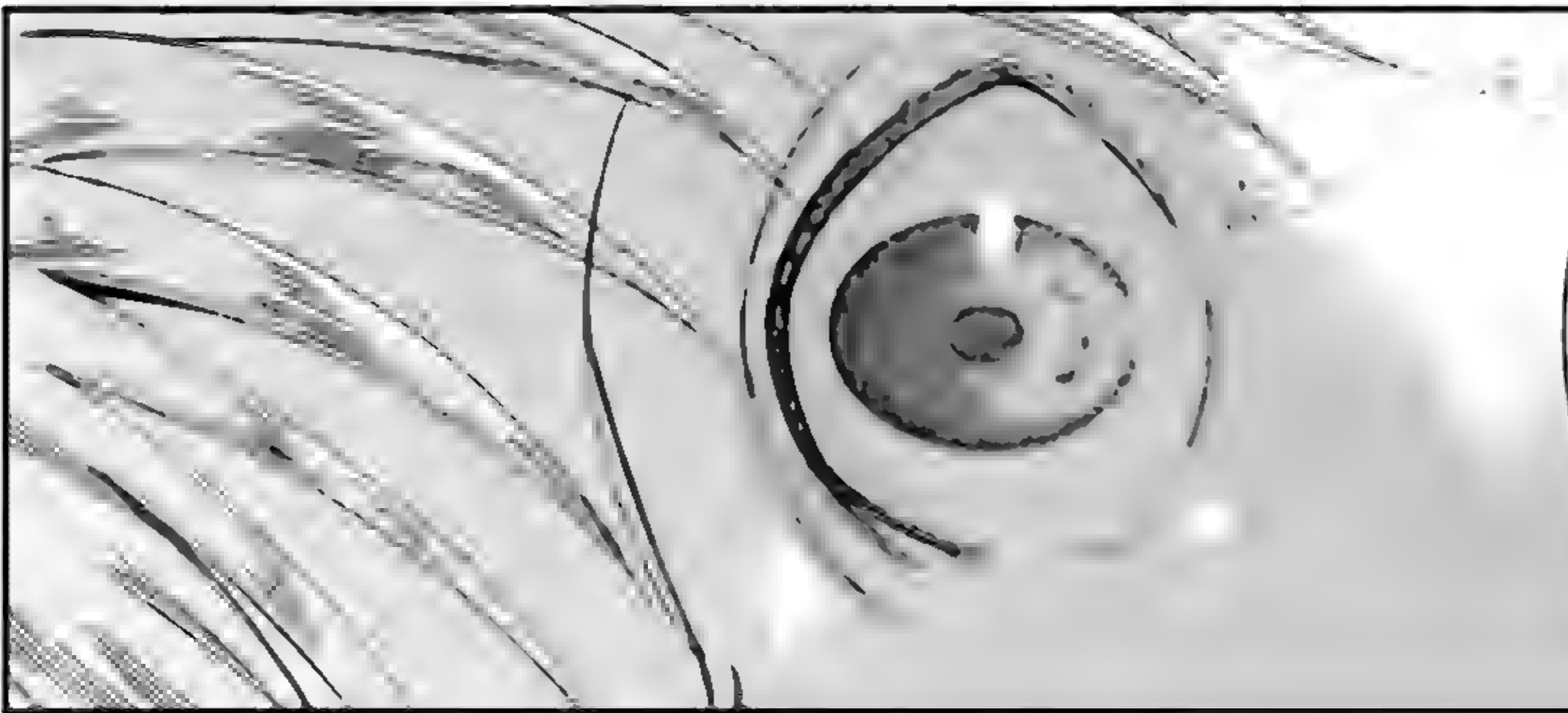
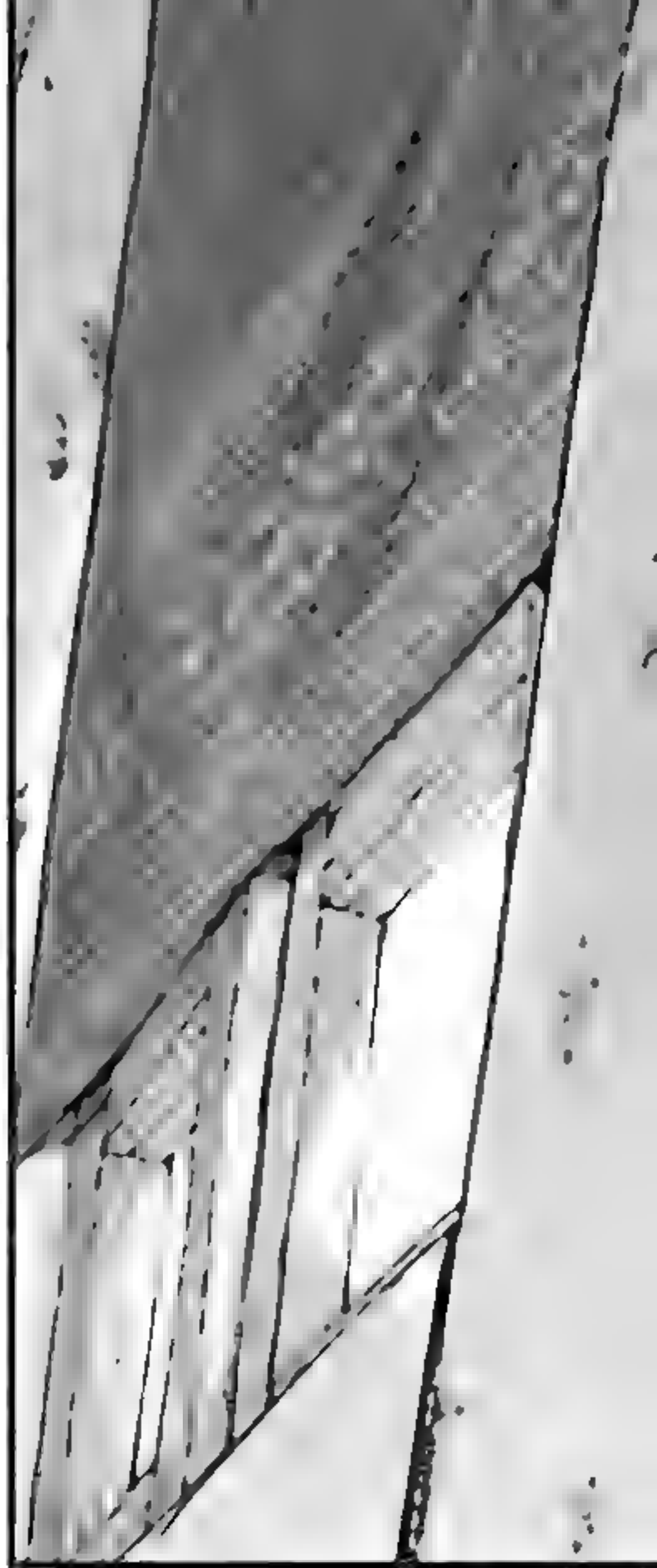
I'M STILL NOTHING  
BUT A LONG-EARS.

OW  
...









THOUGHT  
YOU  
WANTED  
TO BE A  
KAFNA.



FEAR  
IS BORN  
OF THE  
UNKNOWN.  
PEOPLE  
THAT  
LIVED  
LONG  
AGO...

...USED TO  
BE AFRAID  
OF THE  
WEATHER.

BUT THEY  
WORKED  
TOGETHER,  
LEARNING,  
AND FINALLY  
CONQUERED  
THAT FEAR.



IT'S  
SCARY.  
I KNOW.

STARTING  
A NEW JOB  
AMONG A  
GROUP OF  
UNFAMILIAR  
PEOPLE.

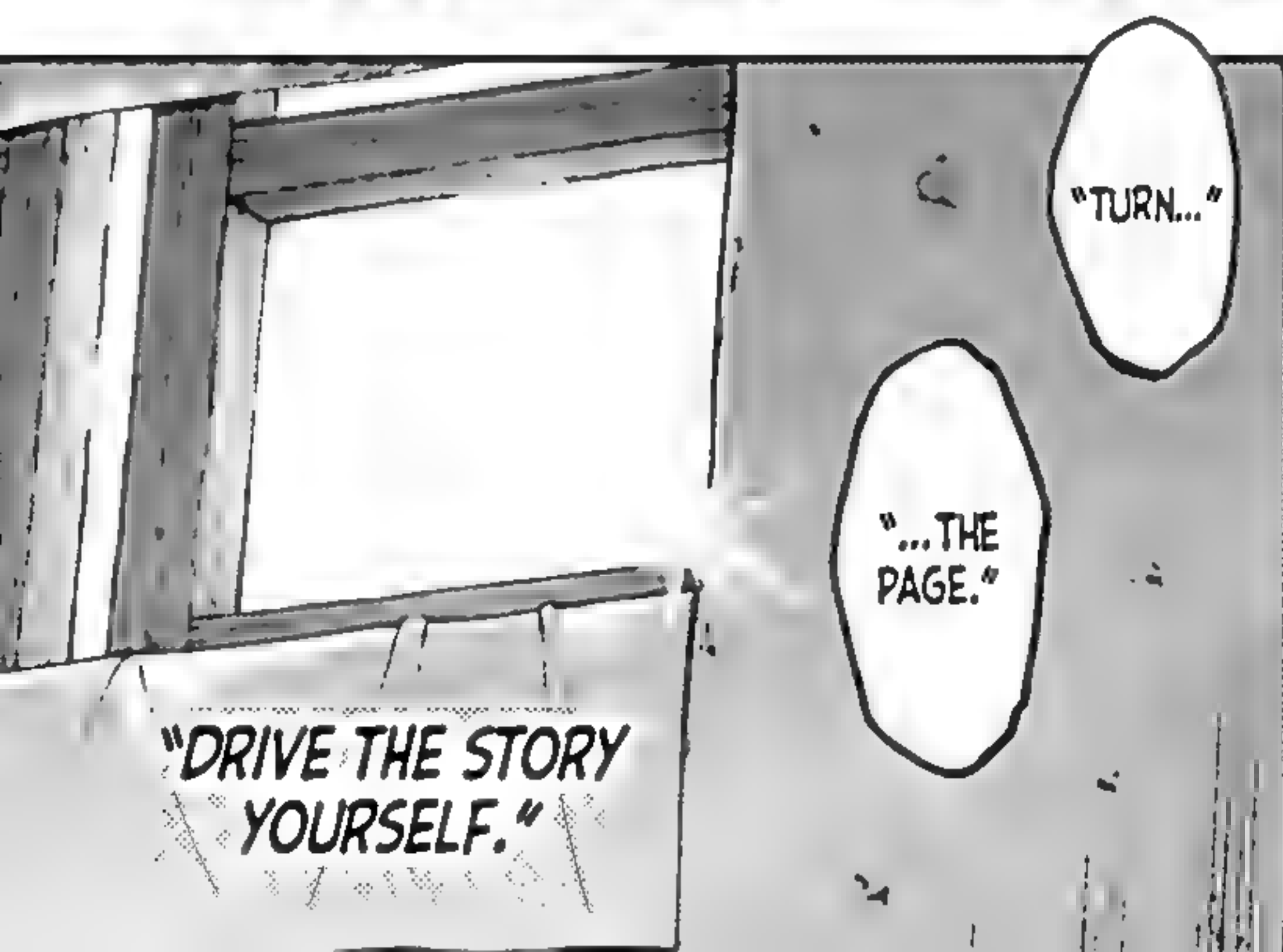
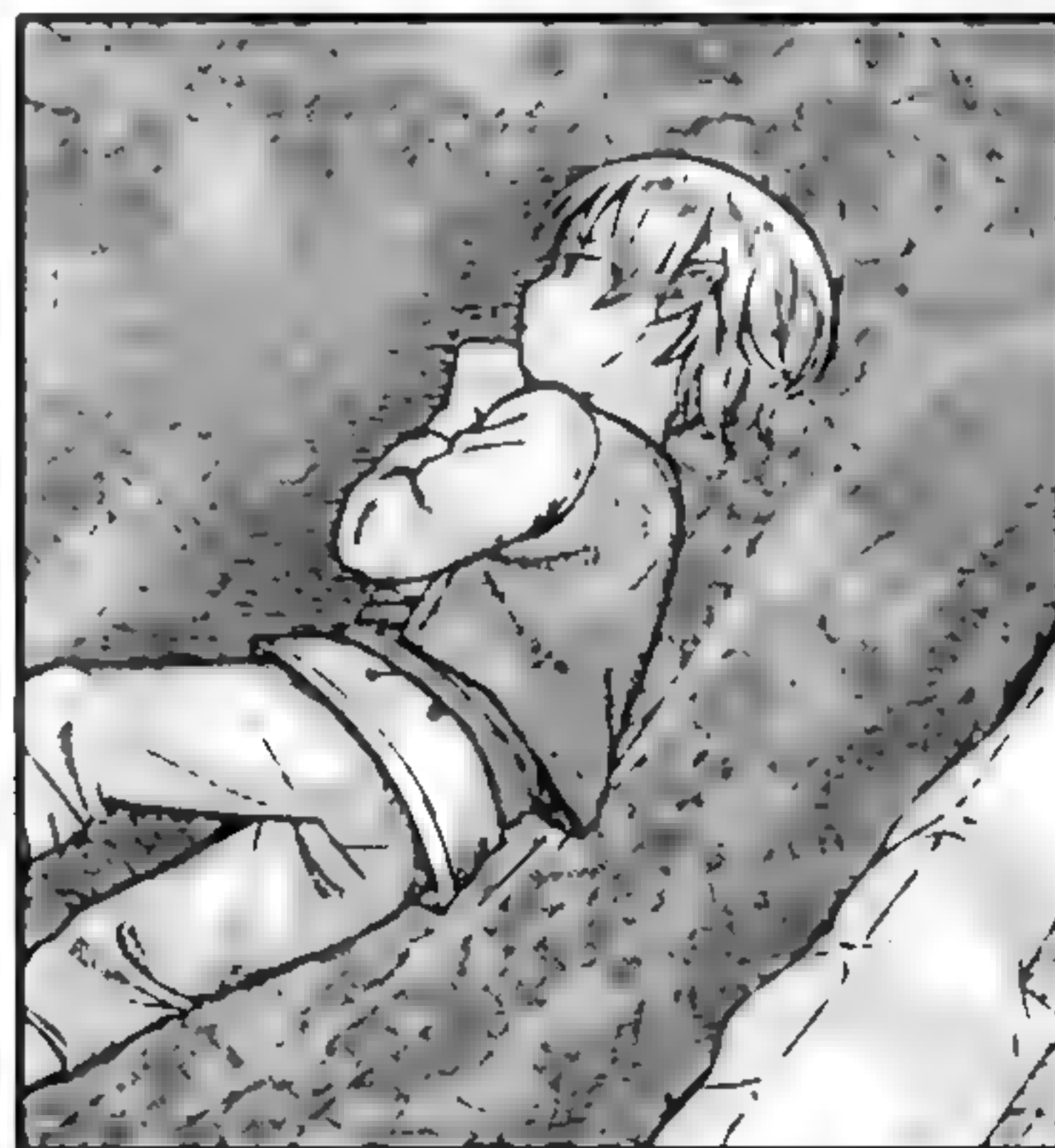
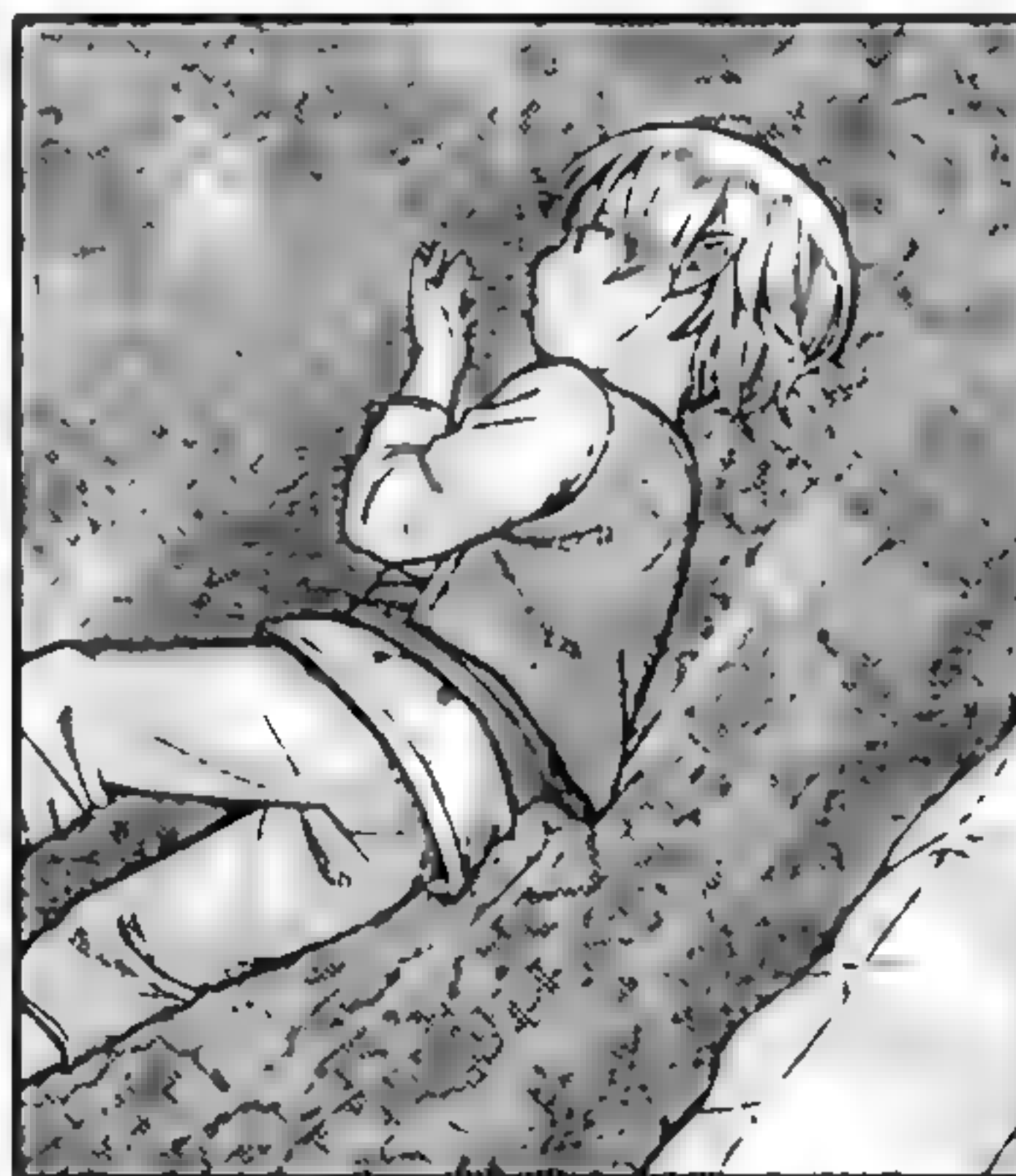
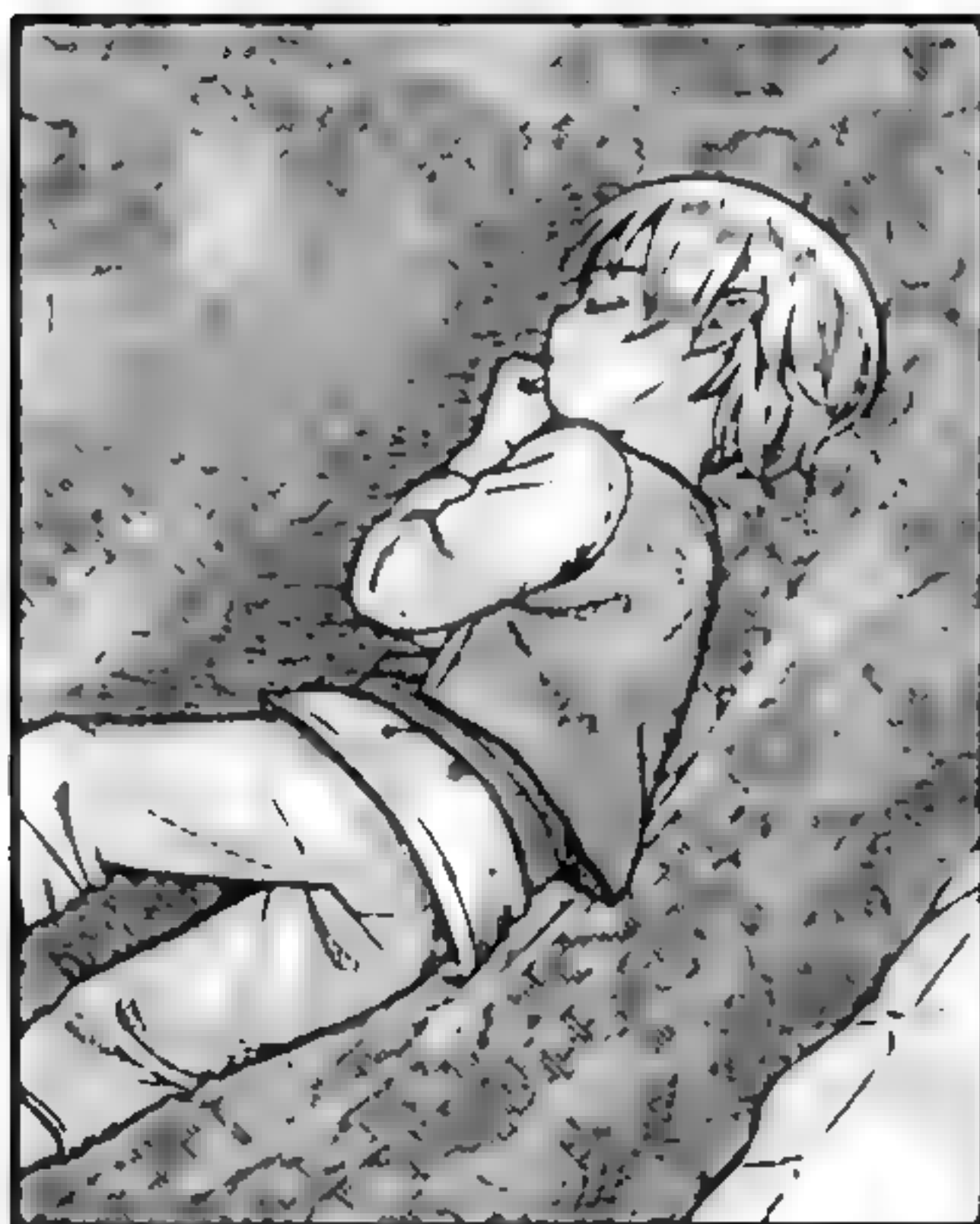
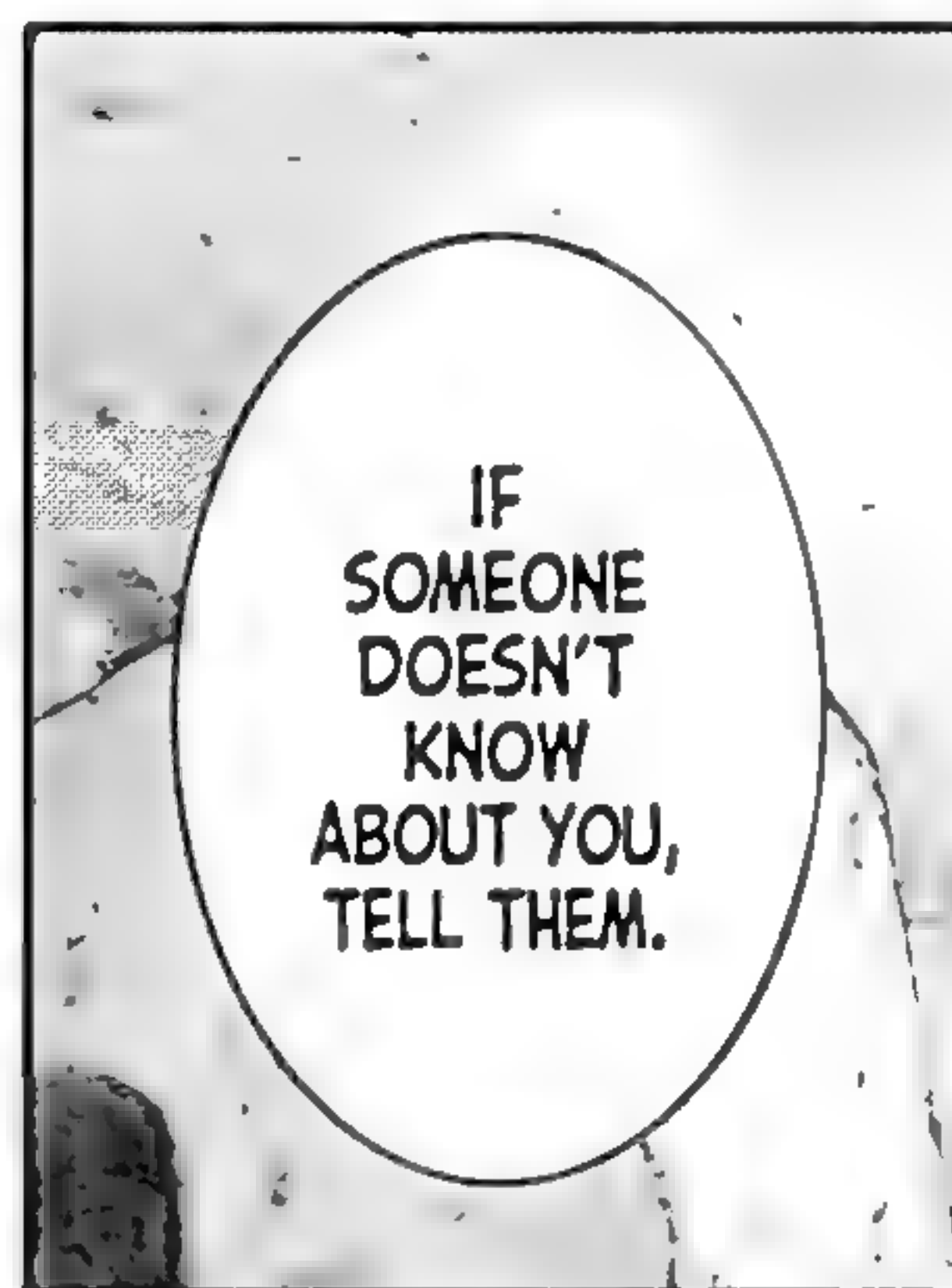
PRETTY  
NATURAL  
TO WANT  
TO RUN  
AWAY IN  
FEAR.







THAT'S WHY PEOPLE IN TOWN PUSH YOU AWAY. THEY DON'T KNOW YOU.





*"CHANGE THE WORLD."*





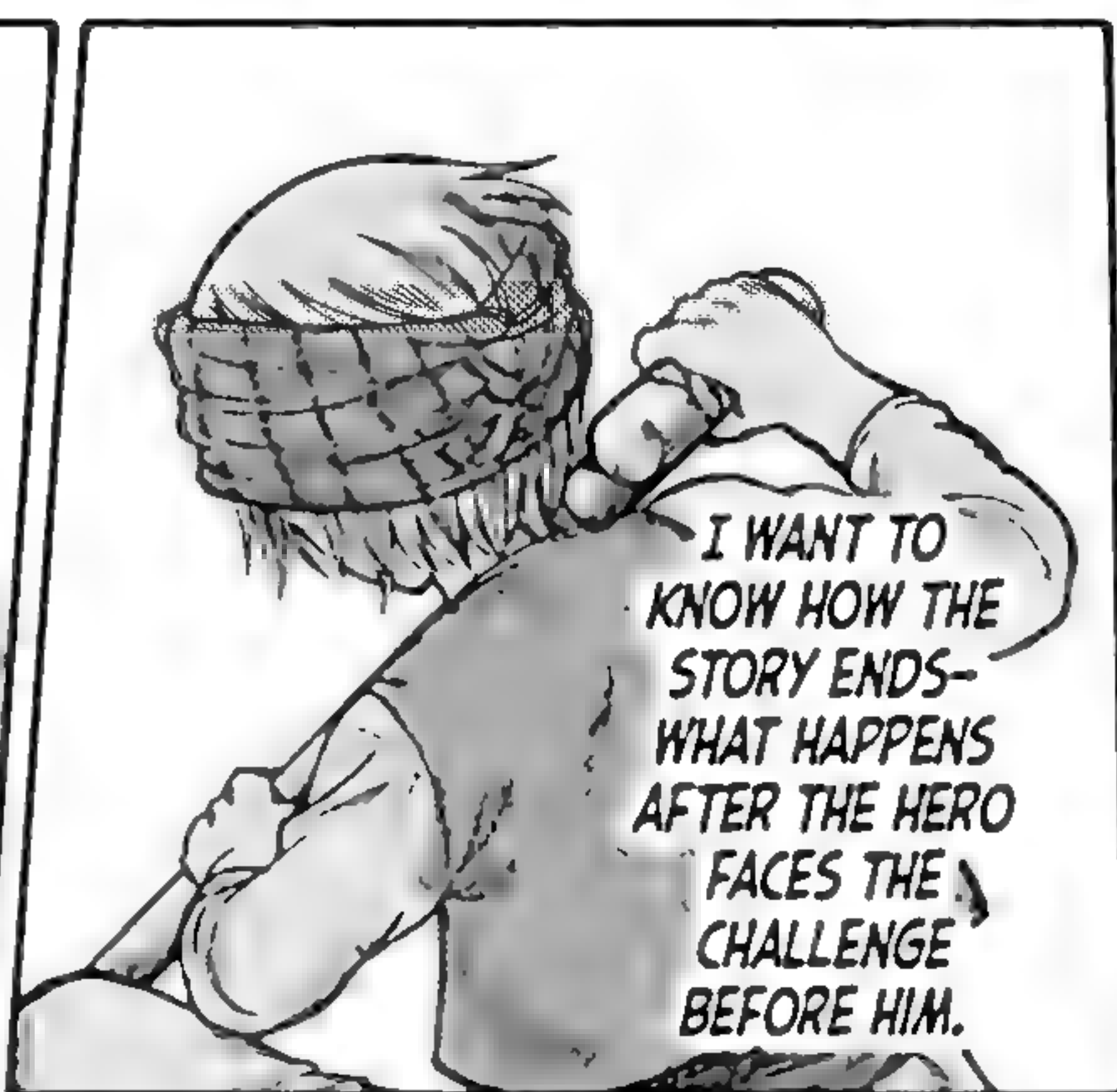




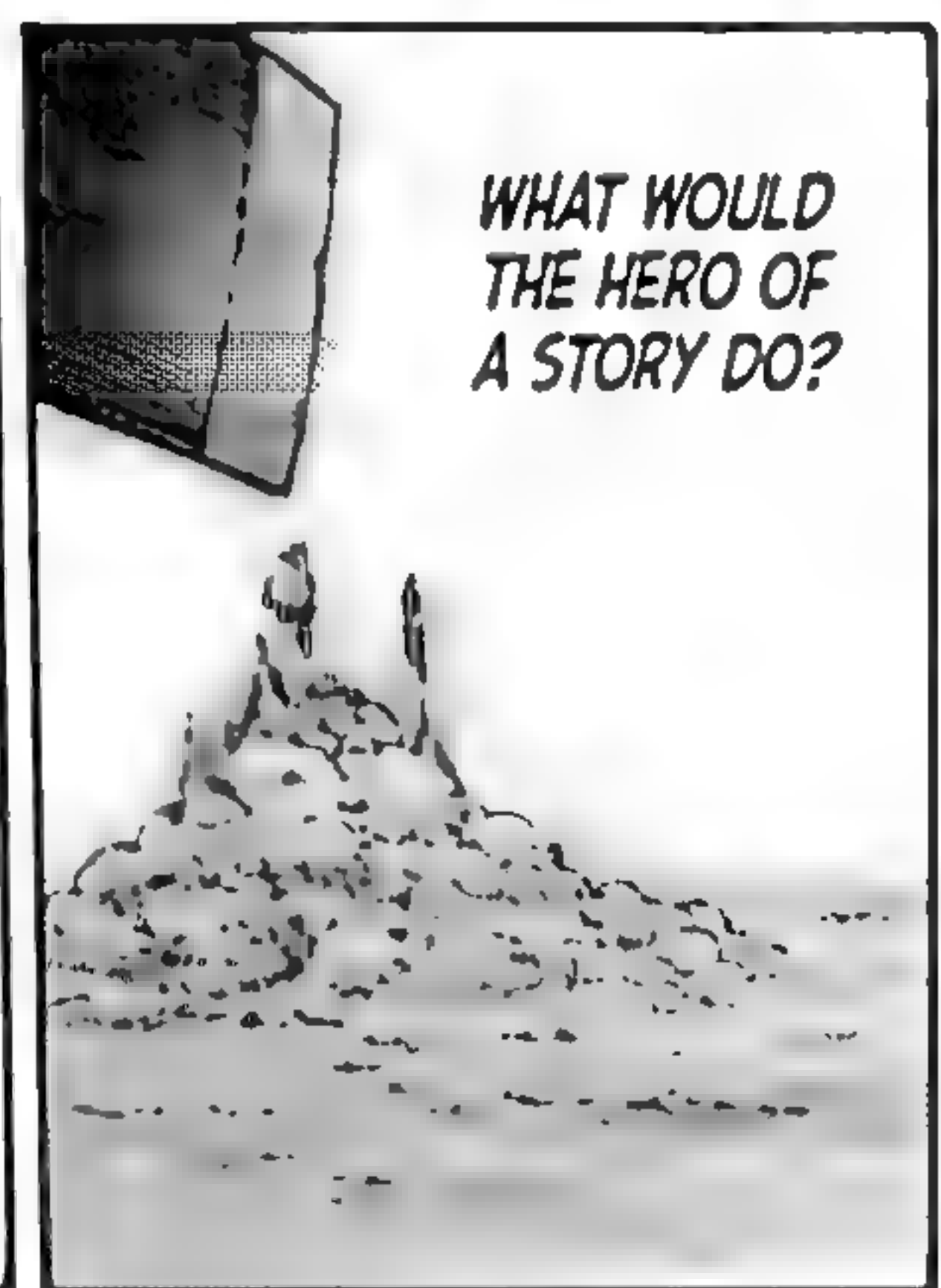


AND  
TO DO  
THAT...

...I HAVE TO  
REACH OUT  
AND TURN  
THE PAGE.



I WANT TO  
KNOW HOW THE  
STORY ENDS-  
WHAT HAPPENS  
AFTER THE HERO  
FACES THE  
CHALLENGE  
BEFORE HIM.



WHAT WOULD  
THE HERO OF  
A STORY DO?

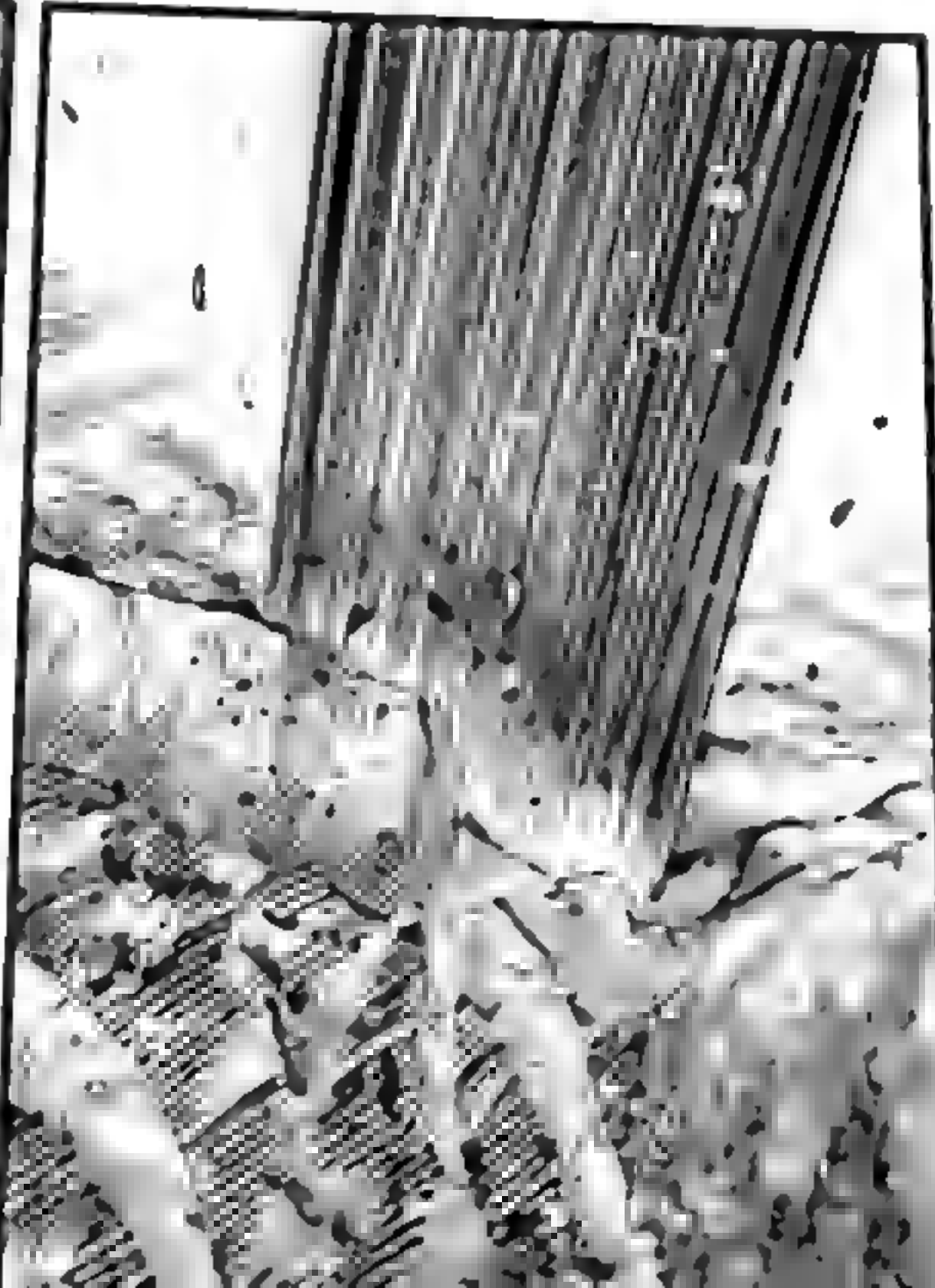
...ANOTHER BREEZE  
TO FLIP THEM FOR ME.

THERE ISN'T  
GOING TO BE...



...MY  
STORY  
WILL  
NEVER  
UNFOLD!

IF I  
DON'T  
TURN  
THE  
PAGES  
MYSELF  
...







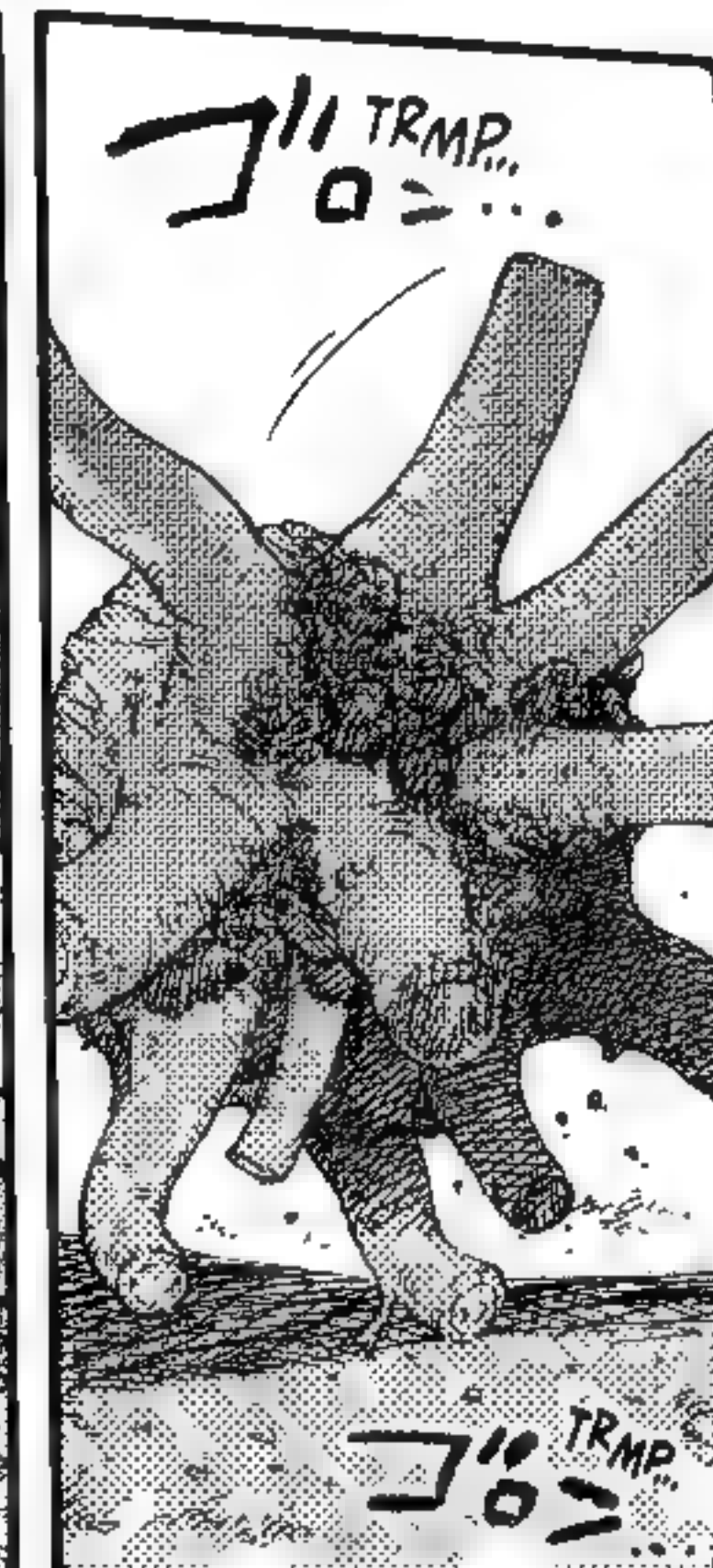
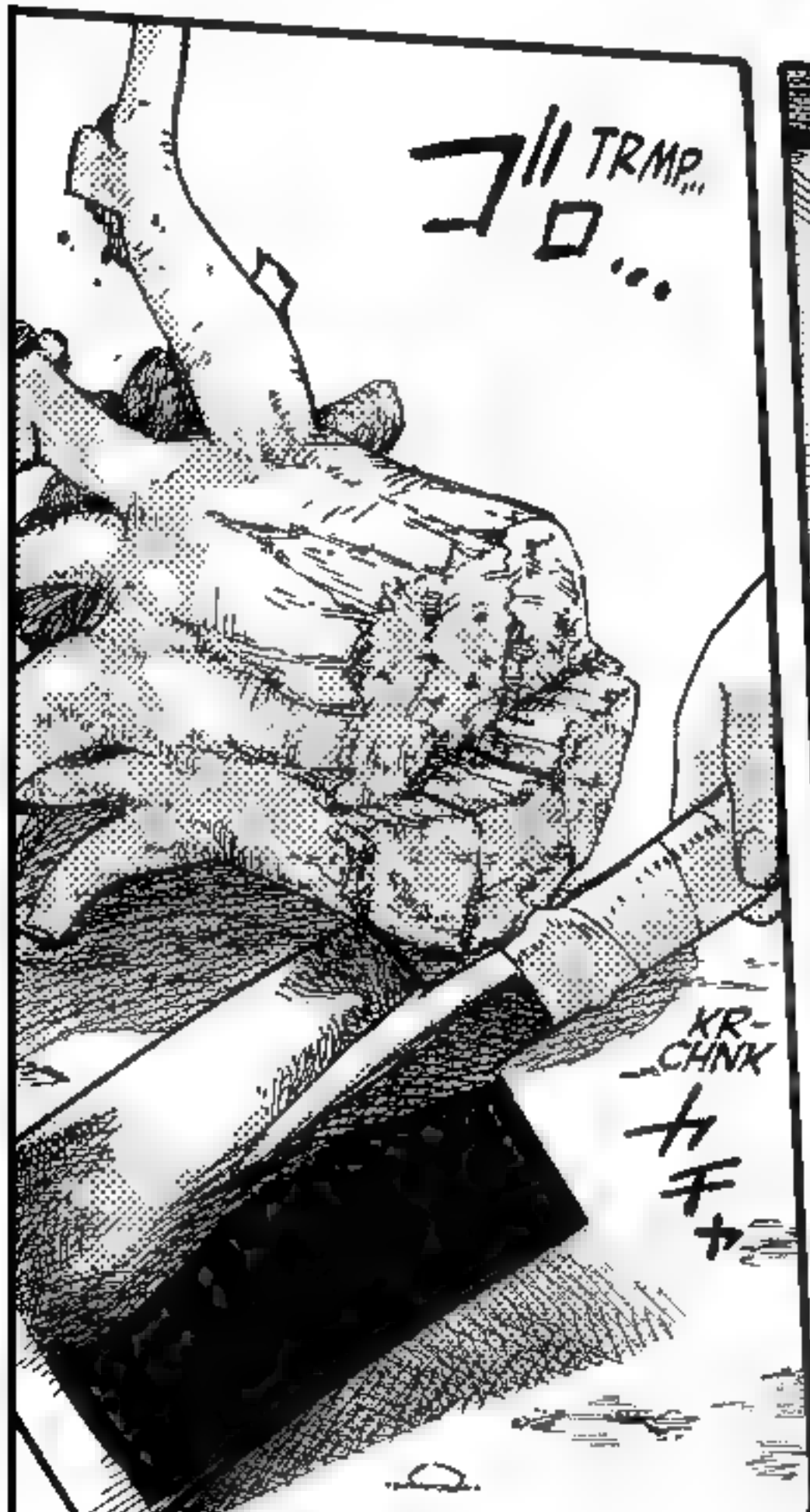
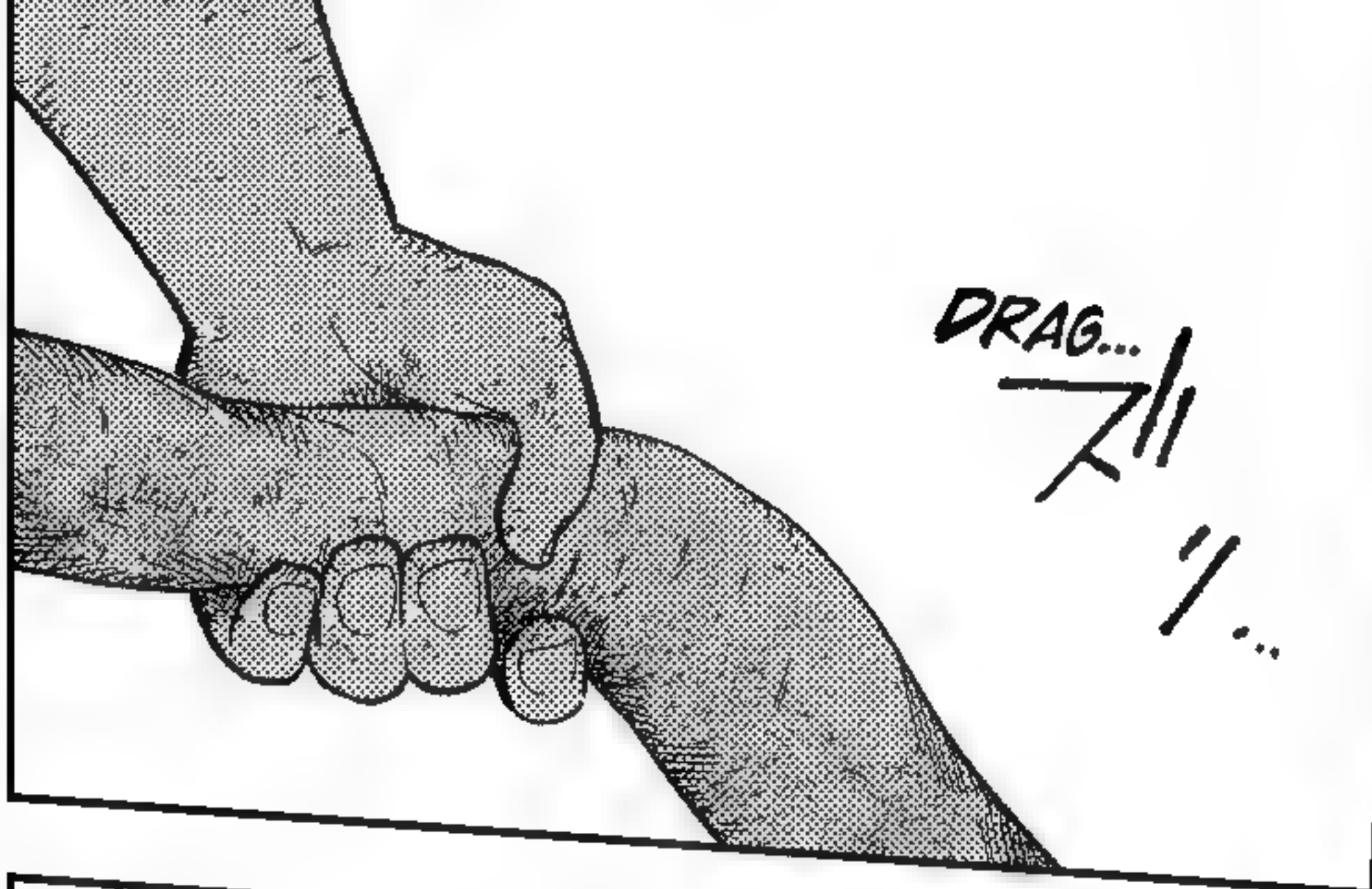














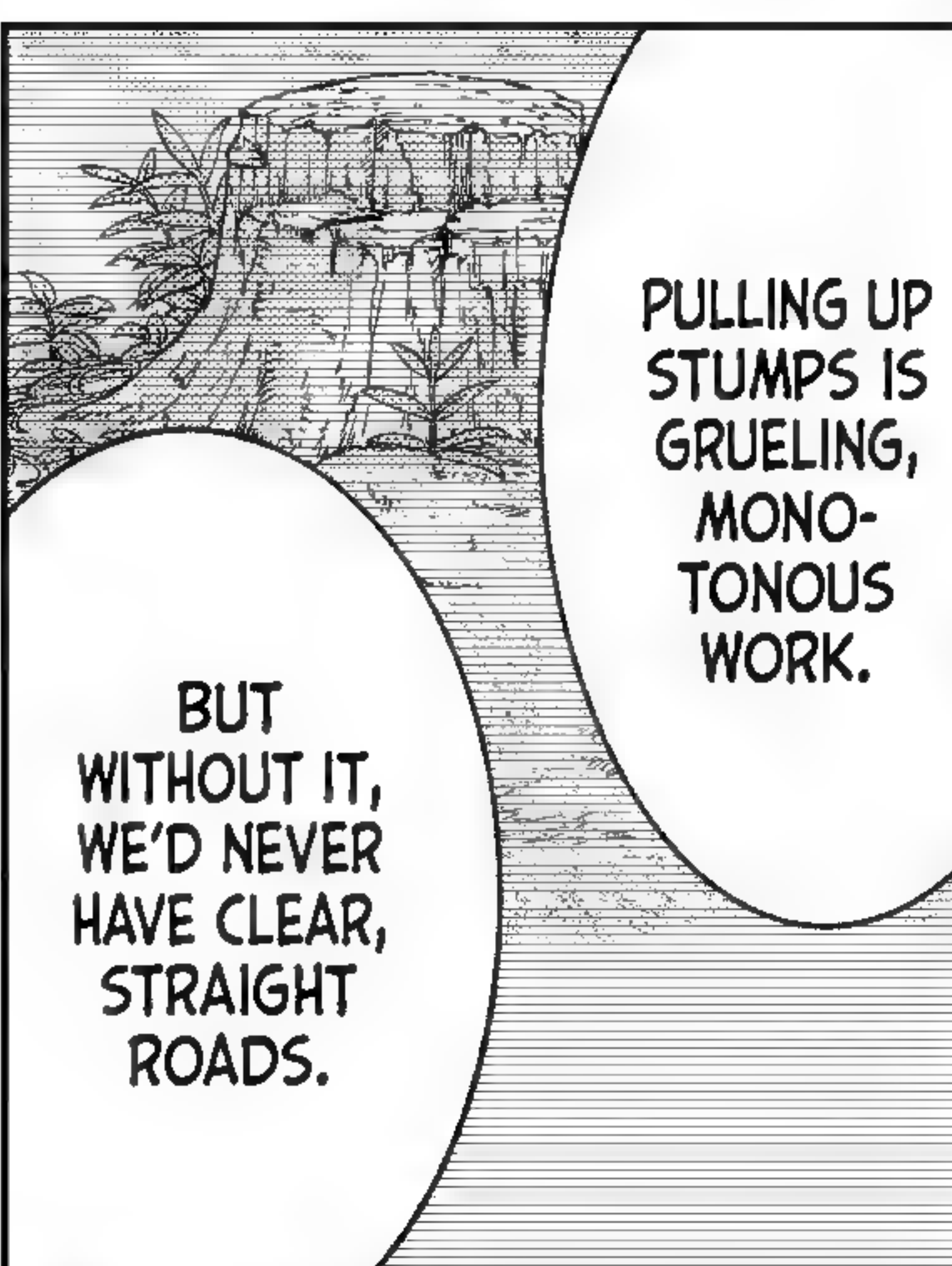


WHO GET  
KICKED FROM  
BEHIND AND  
DON'T SAY  
A WORD IN  
PROTEST!

...EVERY  
TIME THEY  
ENCOUNTER  
A LITTLE  
DIFFICULTY  
IN LIFE.

I DESPISE  
COWARDS  
WHO SLUMP  
THEIR  
SHOULDERS  
...

AND I  
DON'T  
MEAN  
YOUR  
EARS.



PULLING UP  
STUMPS IS  
GRUELING,  
MONO-  
TONOUS  
WORK.

BUT  
WITHOUT IT,  
WE'D NEVER  
HAVE CLEAR,  
STRAIGHT  
ROADS.

...TO  
HAVE  
YOU  
WORK  
WITH  
US.

YOU  
HAVE THE  
STRENGTH  
TO LAY  
ROADS.  
I'D BE  
HONORED  
...

...PROVING  
ME WRONG.

AND  
HERE  
YOU  
ARE  
...

...THAT  
I'M A  
LONG-  
EARS?

YOU  
DON'T  
CARE  
...

Y...

YOU SURE  
THE STUMP  
YOU PICKED  
WASN'T A  
LITTLE TOO  
SMALL,  
DAEM?

WE ALL  
WENT  
THROUGH  
IT WHEN  
WE  
STARTED  
HERE.

...BUT  
AT GANAN  
MASONRY,  
WE DON'T  
CARE  
ABOUT  
THAT.

THE REST  
OF THE  
VILLAGE  
CAN THINK  
WHAT IT  
WANTS...

HUH  
?

SHUT  
YER TRAP.  
IF IT WAS  
IMPOSSI-  
BLE, IT  
WOULDN'T  
BE A TEST.





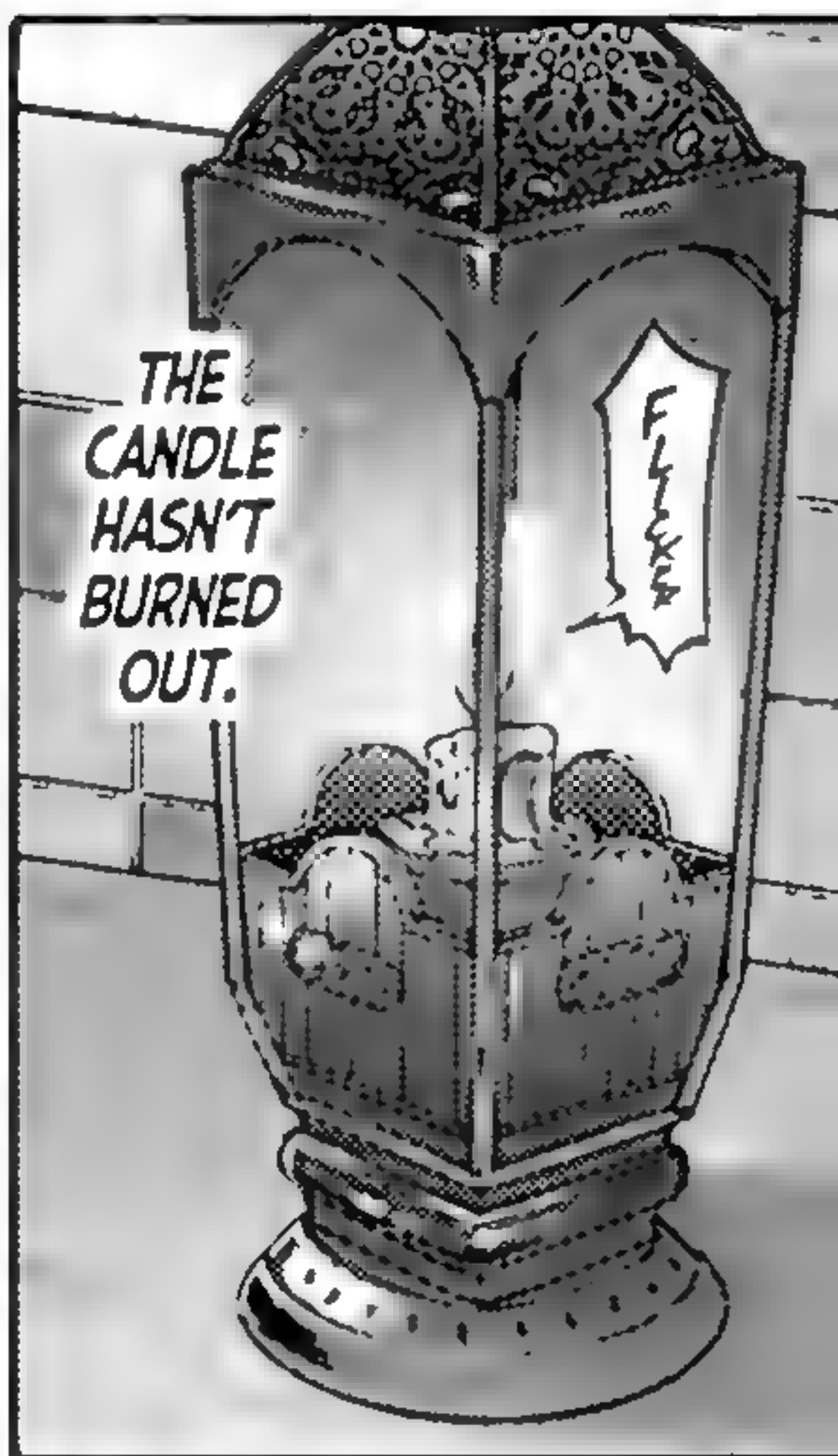
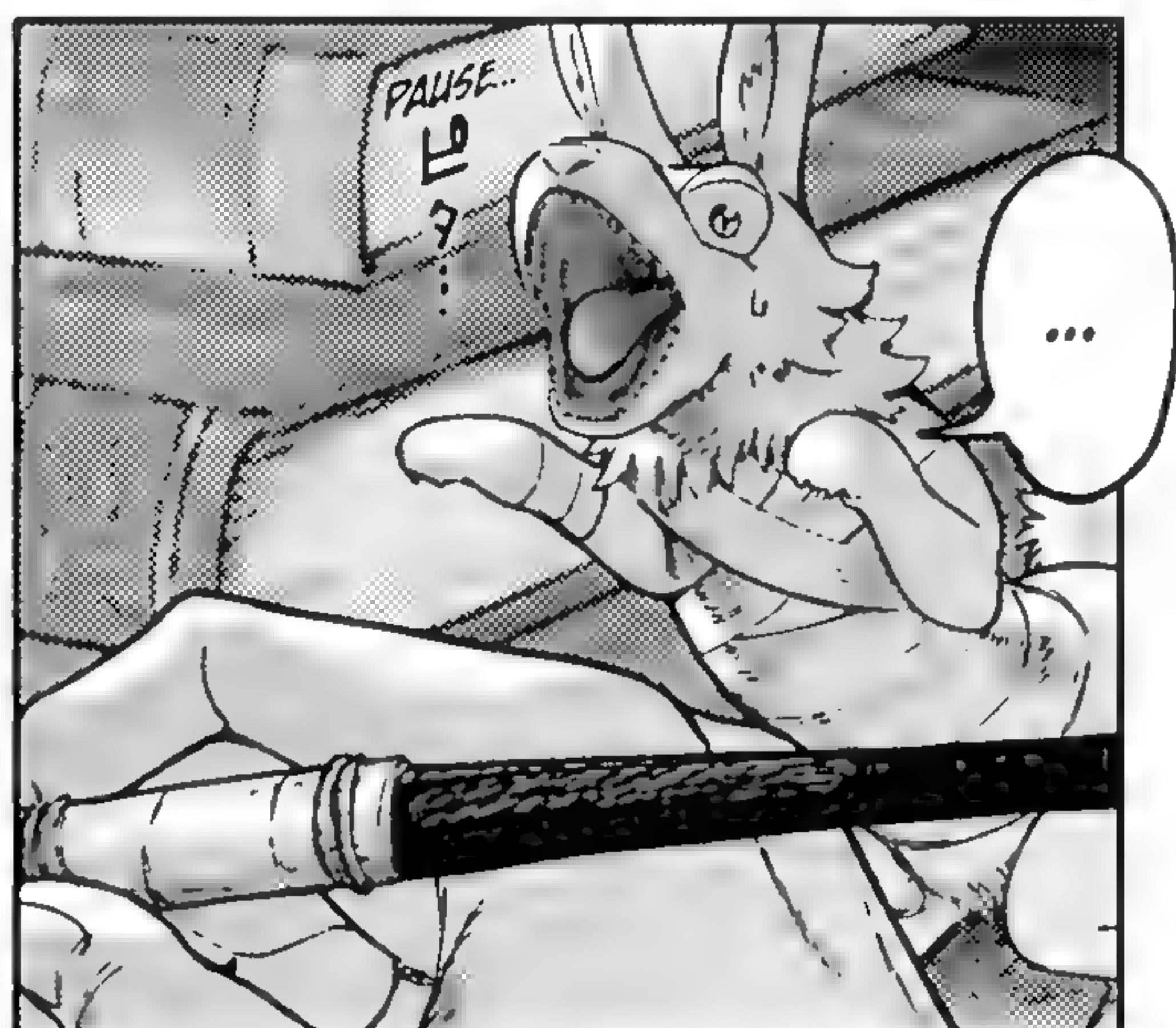


*...the boy  
understood...*

*...how tears—  
and how many of them—  
could accompany joy.*











**THE  
EPISODES  
OF LIFE I  
PENNEED,  
PAGE BY  
PAGE...**



**AND THE  
ROADS  
I LAID...**



**THEY'RE  
ALL  
WITH ME,  
LIFTING  
ME UP.**







DA-  
DONG



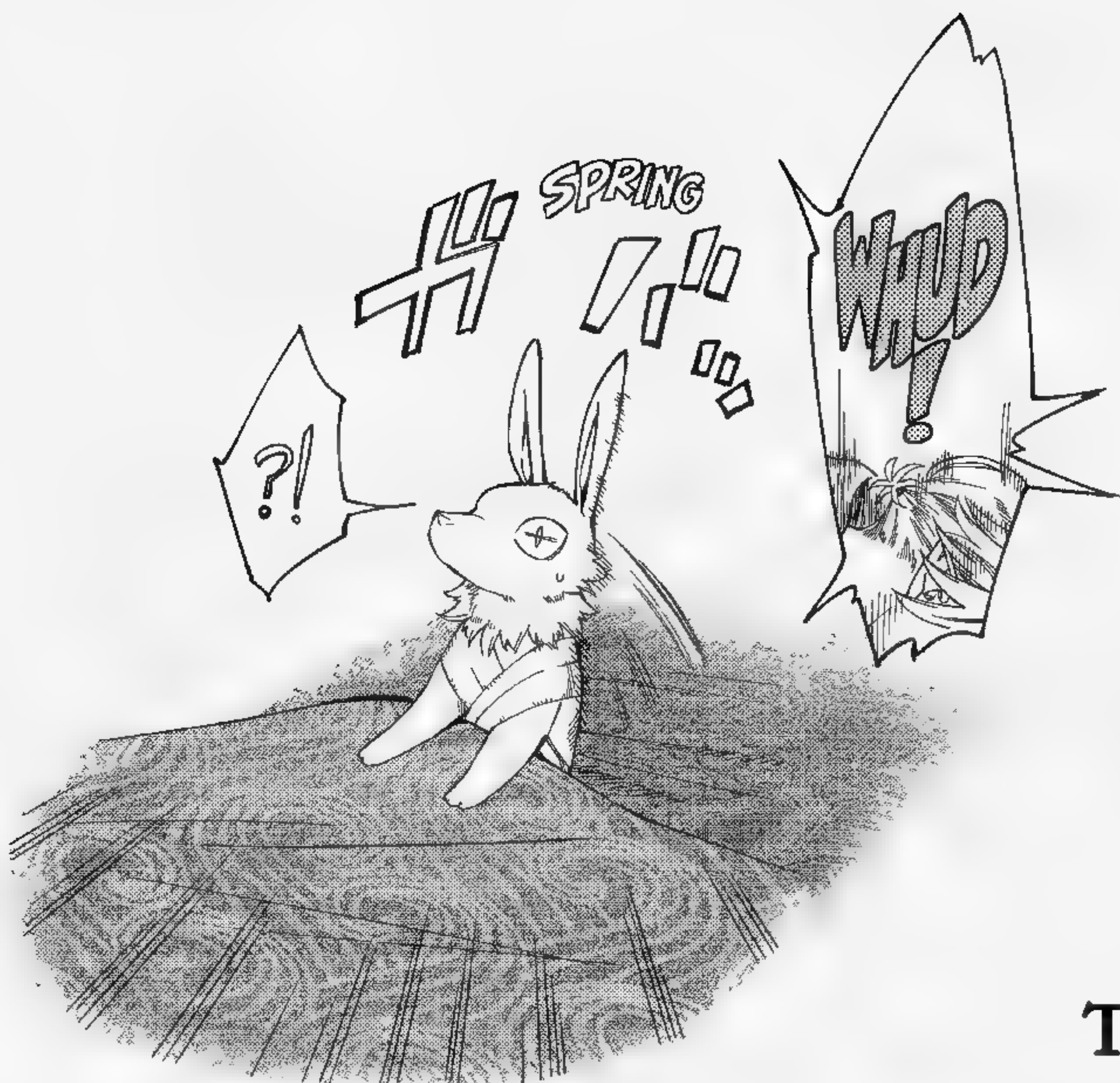
TIME'S  
UP!

DA-  
DONG



PUT  
YOUR  
PENS  
DOWN!

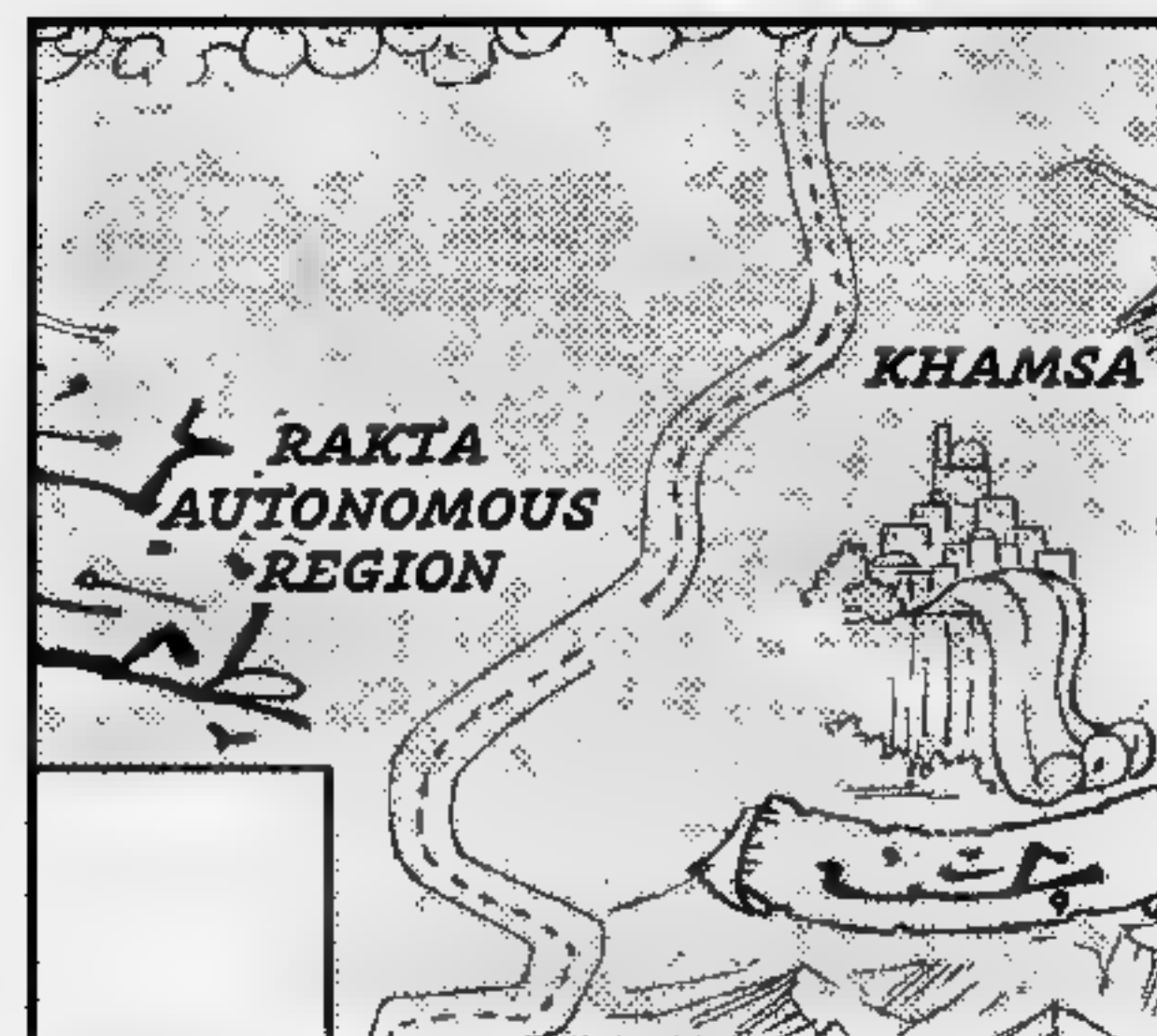




To be continued...



## POINTS OF INTEREST



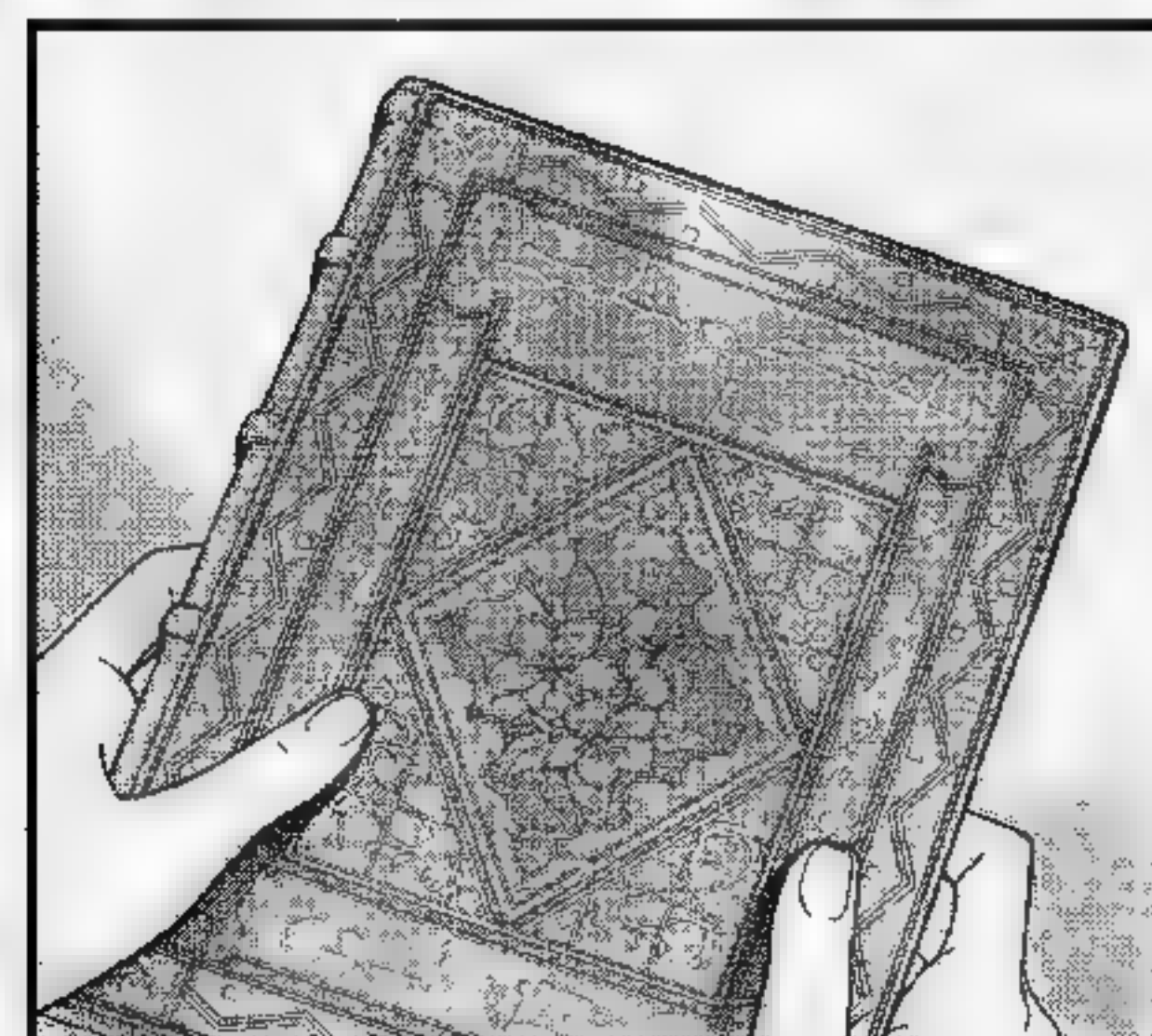
### THE RAKTA AUTONOMOUS REGION

Located to the west of the Hyron Autonomous Region. The Rakta were originally a people that flourished along the coasts, but when they were directly attacked by the Emissary, they fled inland to seek shelter. The region is led by a chief who is also one of the Seven Great Magi: The Magus of the Almanac.



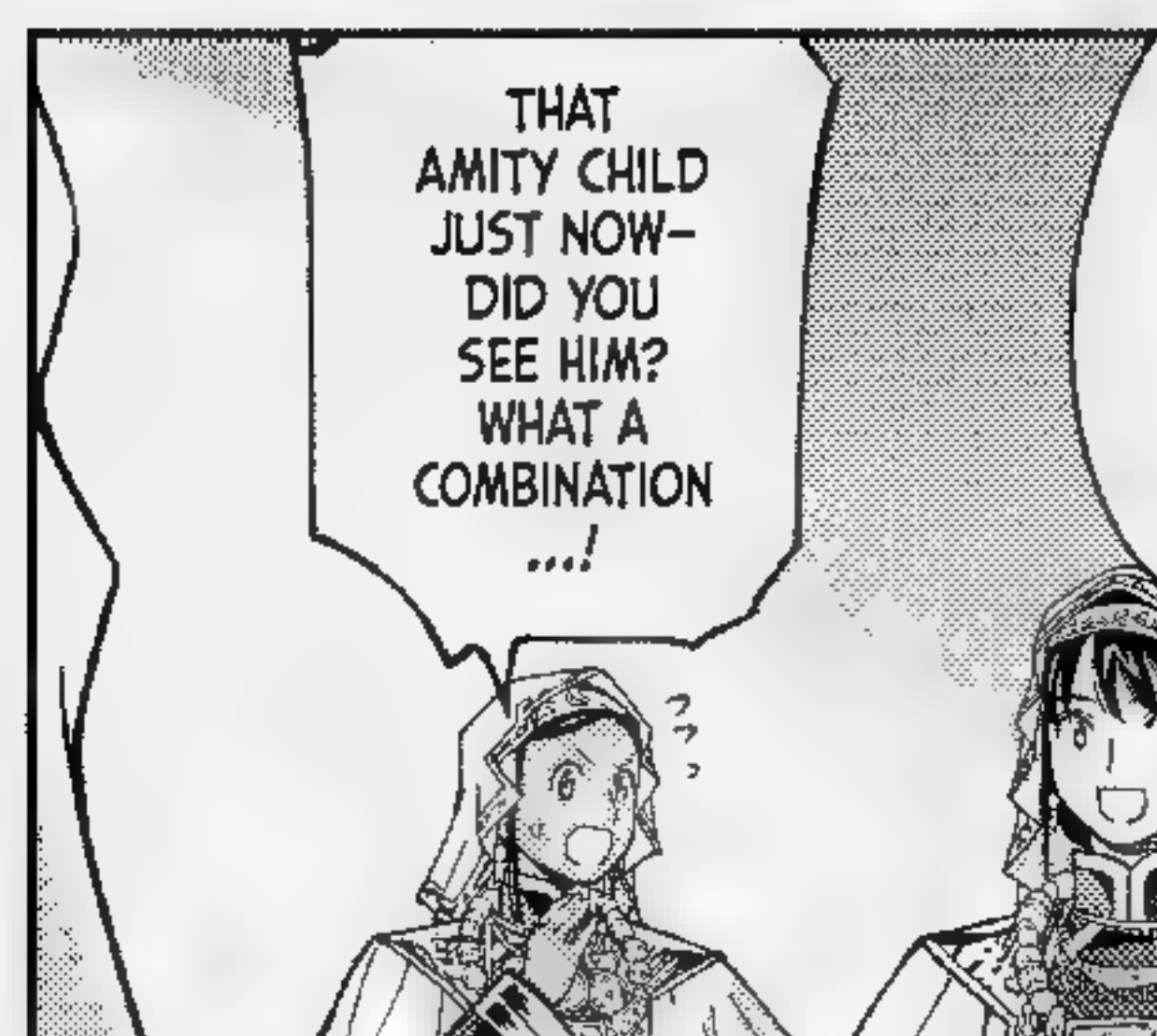
### THE BOOK BANDITS

Two relatively timid thieves who were once part of the band of outlaws known as the Vucub Company. When they shied from the company's more repugnant practices, they were kicked out. The two slipped into Itzamna disguised as merchants and initially planned to carry out their theft in the cover of darkness. However, they unintentionally dawdled until morning. Sadly, the two were foiled by Theo and his desperate show of strength.



### POEMS PENNED ON THE ROAD

A novel by the author Atlacamani. It tells the story of an arrogant king who is turned into an animal by a magus and then travels the world in search of true love. At the end, the king is returned to normal by the kiss of an impoverished young woman.



### AMITY CHILD

A term coined by the noted social scientist Vichaama. As the concept of a "half-blood" is construed unfavorably by some, a certain segment of influential individuals centered around Aftzaak urge for the use of this term instead, to imply that the birth of children of mixed heritage is a sign of progress toward global harmony.



### FATHER IN HEAVEN

This term refers to Viracocha, the god worshipped in the Asin religion. Two religions dominate the Hyron Autonomous Region: Asin, founded by the Hyron themselves, and Manaccha (the Way of Mana), an ancient faith found across the continent.

## THE FUTURE



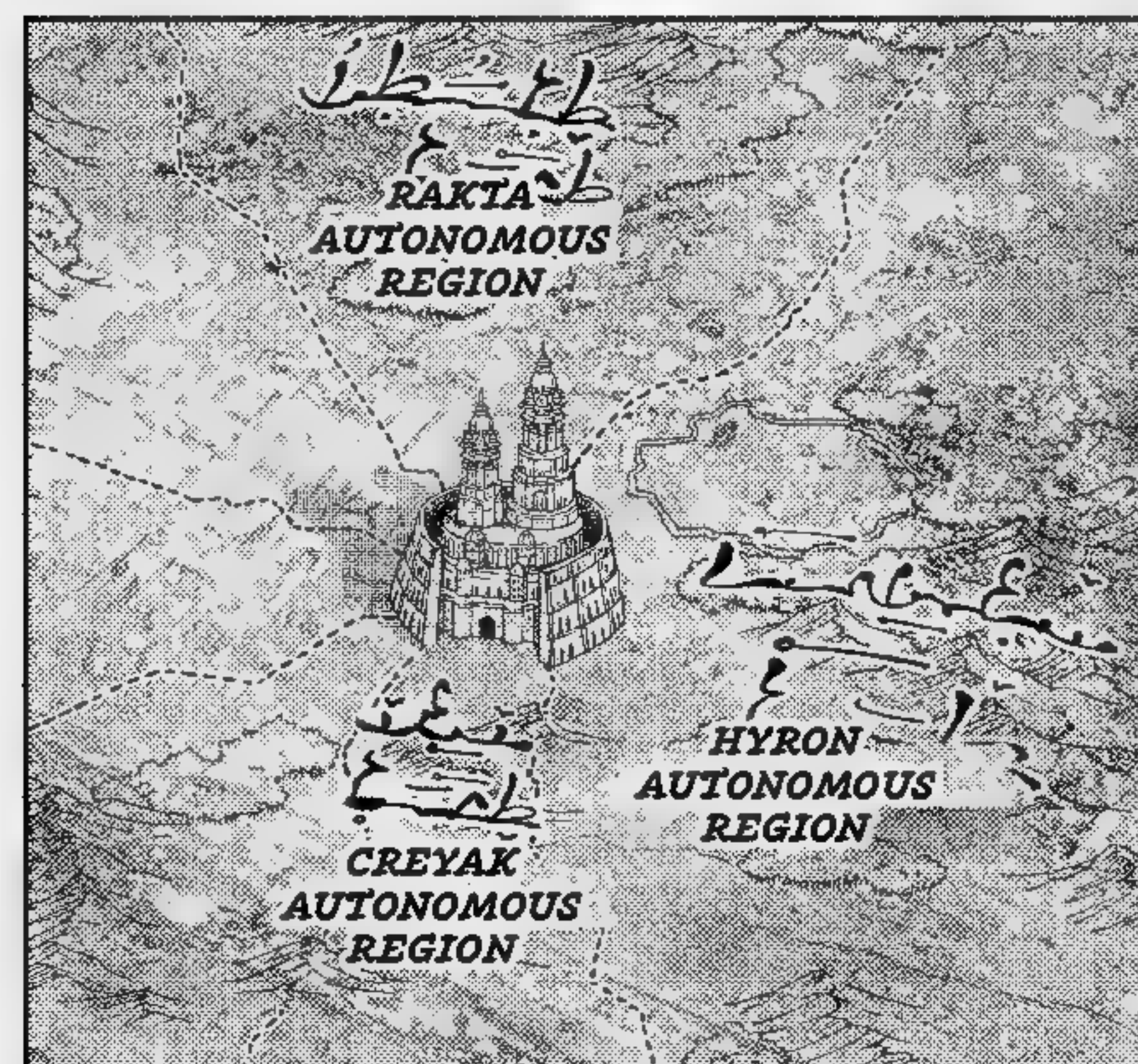
## SERIES TERMINOLOGY

### THE HYRON

A race that saw its beginning as a mingling of the Jagwa and Hydiah. The Hyron were initially a quiet people living deep within the continent, but when they managed to avoid much of the suffering endured by the other races on the Emissary's arrival, they suddenly found themselves the dominant people on the continent.

### THE AUTONOMOUS REGIONS

Following the war between the races, the Atlatonan Continent was divided into seven regions, with Aftzaak at their center. Each region is controlled by one of the Seven Landed Races. Races aside from these seven build their villages and towns on land borrowed from the races in charge of the Autonomous Regions.



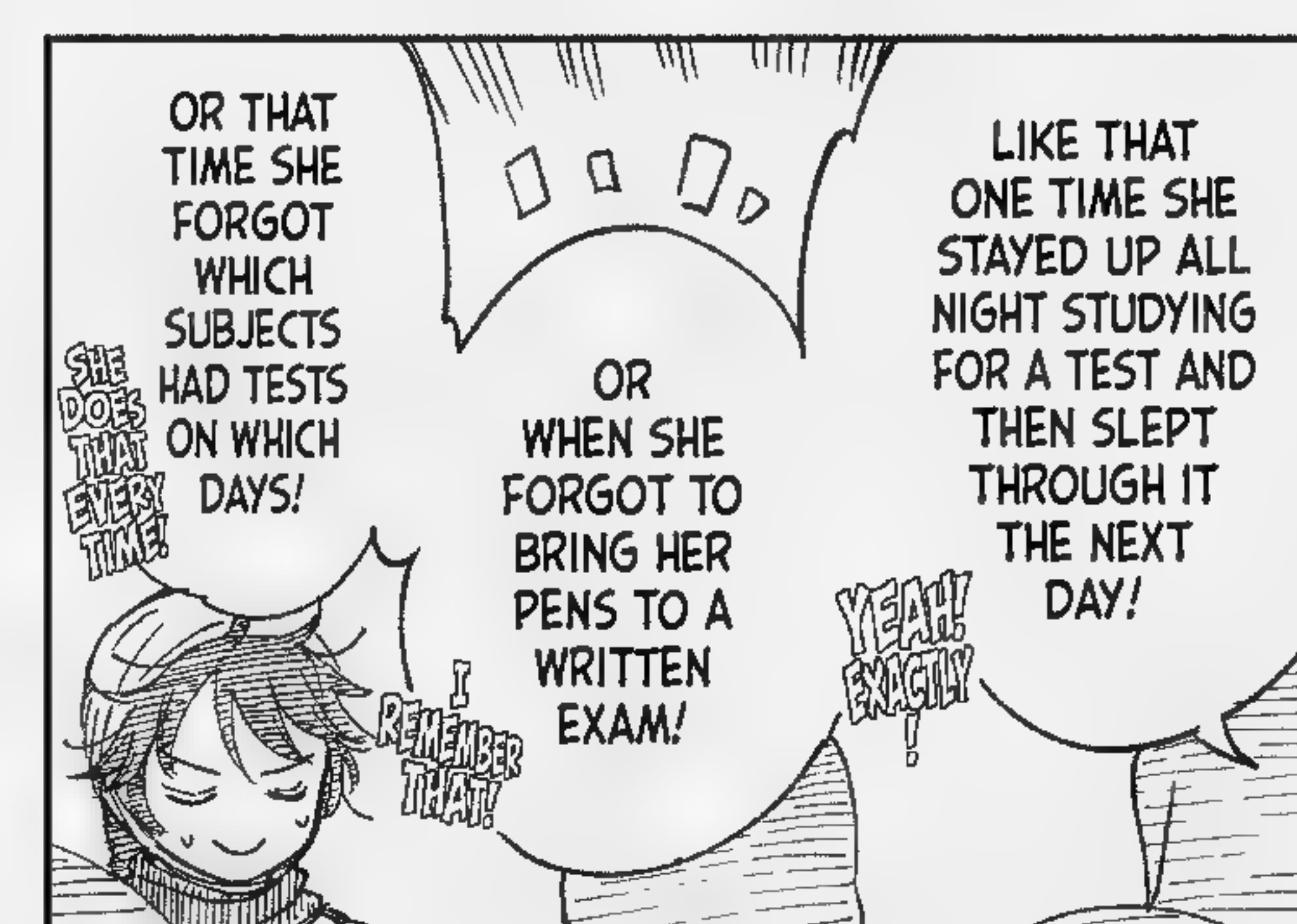
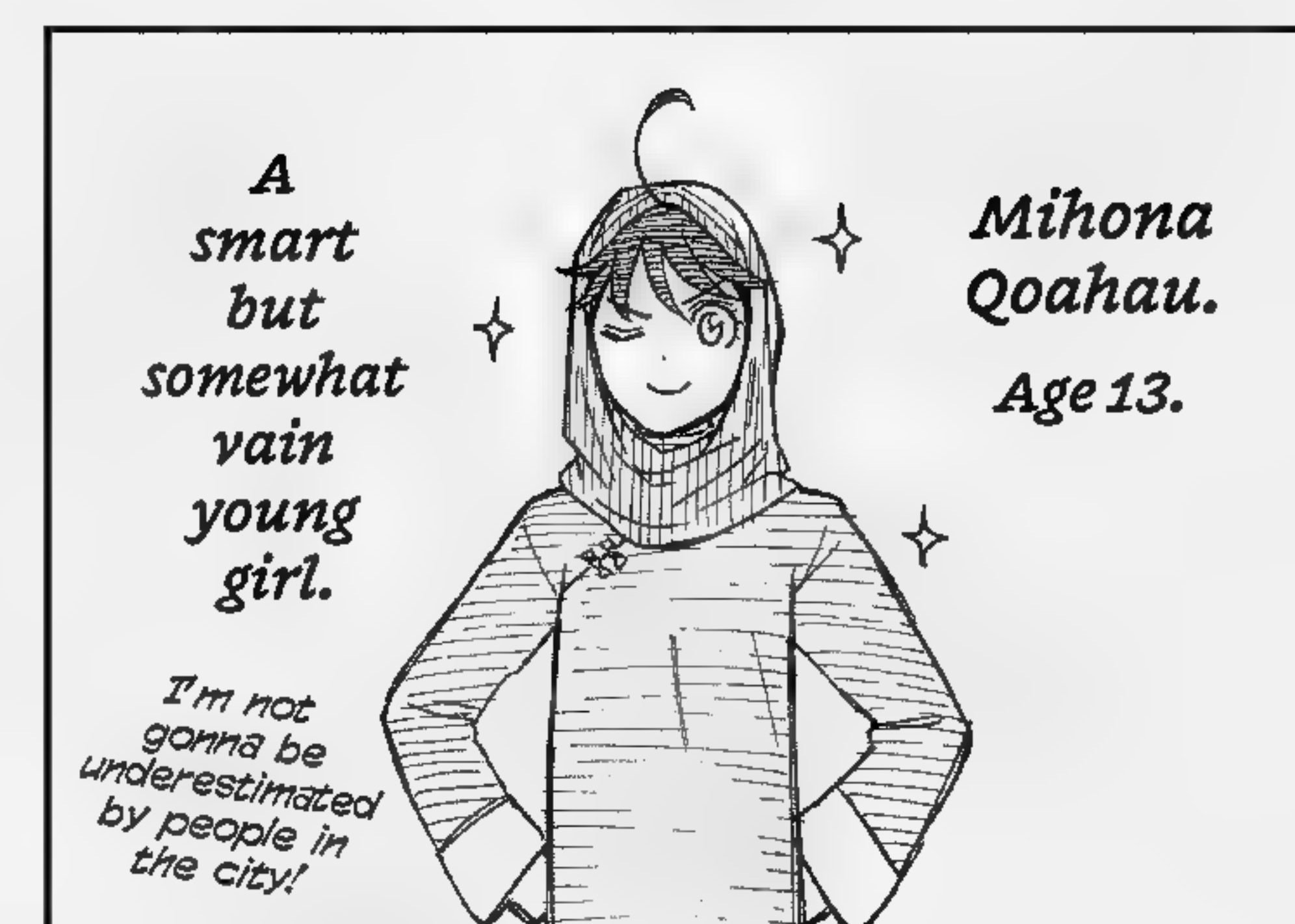
### THE SEVEN LANDED RACES

This refers to the seven races that each sent a magus to battle the Emissary of Wormwood (the magi themselves would later be known as the "Seven Great Magi"). Following the war between the races, efforts to rebuild the continent centered around these seven magi, and the races they represented were each granted control of an Autonomous Region.

#### THE SEVEN LANDED RACES AND RESPECTIVE CHARACTERS THAT HAVE APPEARED THUS FAR

Hyron .....	Theo, Mihona, Alv, etc.
Rakta .....	Sedona, Chise
Hauipi .....	None
Kadoe .....	None
Kokopah .....	Pipiri, Peperico
Creyak .....	None
Syrrana .....	None

## THE PAST





Acclaimed screenwriter and director Mari Okada (*Maquia, anohana*) teams up with manga artist Nao Emoto (*Forget Me Not*) in this moving, funny, so-true-it's-embarrassing coming-of-age series!

When Kazusa enters high school, she joins the Literature Club, and leaps from reading innocent fiction to diving into the literary classics. But these novels are a bit more...*adult* than she was prepared for. Between euphemisms like fresh dewy grass and pork stew, crushing on the boy next door, and knowing you want to do that *one thing* before you die—discovering your budding sexuality is no easy feat! As if puberty wasn't awkward enough, the club consists of a brooding writer, the prettiest girl in school, an agreeable comrade, and an outspoken prude. Fumbling over their own discomforts, these five teens get thrown into chaos over three little letters: *S...E...X...*!

# O Maidens in Your Savage Season

Anime  
coming  
soon!

Mari Okada

Nao Emoto

O Maidens in Your Savage Season © Mari Okada/Nao Emoto/Kodansha Ltd





# EDENS ZERO

エデンスゼロ

**HIRO MASHIMA IS BACK! JOIN THE CREATOR OF *FAIRY TAIL* AS HE TAKES TO THE STARS FOR ANOTHER THRILLING SAGA!**



EDENS ZERO © Hiro Mashima/Kodansha, Ltd.

**A high-flying space adventure! All the steadfast friendship and wild fighting you've been waiting for...IN SPACE!**

At Granbell Kingdom, an abandoned amusement park, Shiki has lived his entire life among machines. But one day, Rebecca and her cat companion Happy appear at the park's front gates. Little do these newcomers know that this is the first human contact Granbell has had in a hundred years! As Shiki stumbles his way into making new friends, his former neighbors stir at an opportunity for a robo-rebellion... And when his old homeland becomes too dangerous, Shiki must join Rebecca and Happy on their spaceship and escape into the boundless cosmos.

**KC**  
**KODANSHA**  
**COMICS**



THE HIGH SCHOOL HAREM COMEDY WITH FIVE TIMES THE CUTE GIRLS!

"An entertaining romantic-comedy with a snarky edge to it." —Taykobon



Futaro Uesugi is a second-year in high school, scraping to get by and pay off his family's debt. The only thing he can do is study, so when Futaro receives a part-time job offer to tutor the five daughters of a wealthy businessman, he can't pass it up. Little does he know, these five beautiful sisters are quintuplets, but the only thing they have in common...is that they're all terrible at studying!

# THE QUINTESSENTIAL QUINTUPLETS

negi haruba

ANIME  
OUT NOW!

KC  
KODANSHA  
COMICS



A dark and sexy body-horror action  
manga perfect for fans of *Prison School*  
and *High School of the Dead*!

Shuichi Kagaya is a smart kid, and most smart kids his age would be thinking about college. Shuichi is also a monster, and he's smart enough to know that monsters don't go to college. But after he uses his monstrous form to save his classmate Claire Aoki, it doesn't matter what his plans for the future were, because he's not the one making the decisions anymore. Now that the seductive, sadistic Claire knows Shuichi's secret, she's got her own ideas about what a monster is good for—because he's not the first monster she's met...

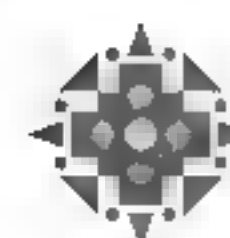


# GLEIPNIR

Gleipnir © Sun Takeda/Kodansha Ltd.

“You and me together...we would be unstoppable.”





◀ KAMOME ▶  
SHIRAHAMA

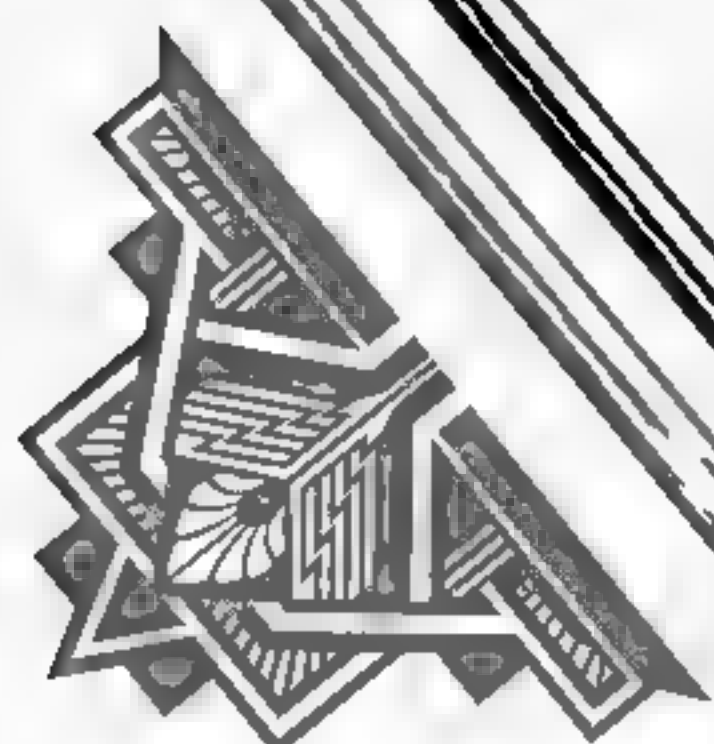
# Witch Hat Atelier

A magical manga  
adventure for  
fans of Disney  
and Studio  
Ghibli!

Witch Hat Atelier © Kamome Shirahama/Kodansha Ltd

**The magical adventure that took Japan by storm is finally here, from acclaimed DC and Marvel cover artist Kamome Shirahama!**

In a world where everyone takes wonders like magic spells and dragons for granted, Coco is a girl with a simple dream: She wants to be a witch. But everybody knows magicians are born, not made, and Coco was not born with a gift for magic. Resigned to her un-magical life, Coco is about to give up on her dream to become a witch...until the day she meets Qifrey, a mysterious, traveling magician. After secretly seeing Qifrey perform magic in a way she's never seen before, Coco soon learns what everybody "knows" might not be the truth, and discovers that her magical dream may not be as far away as it may seem...





THE MAGICAL GIRL CLASSIC THAT BROUGHT A  
GENERATION OF READERS TO MANGA, NOW BACK IN A  
DEFINITIVE, HARDCOVER COLLECTOR'S EDITION!

# CARDCAPTOR SAKURA

## COLLECTOR'S EDITION

CLAMP



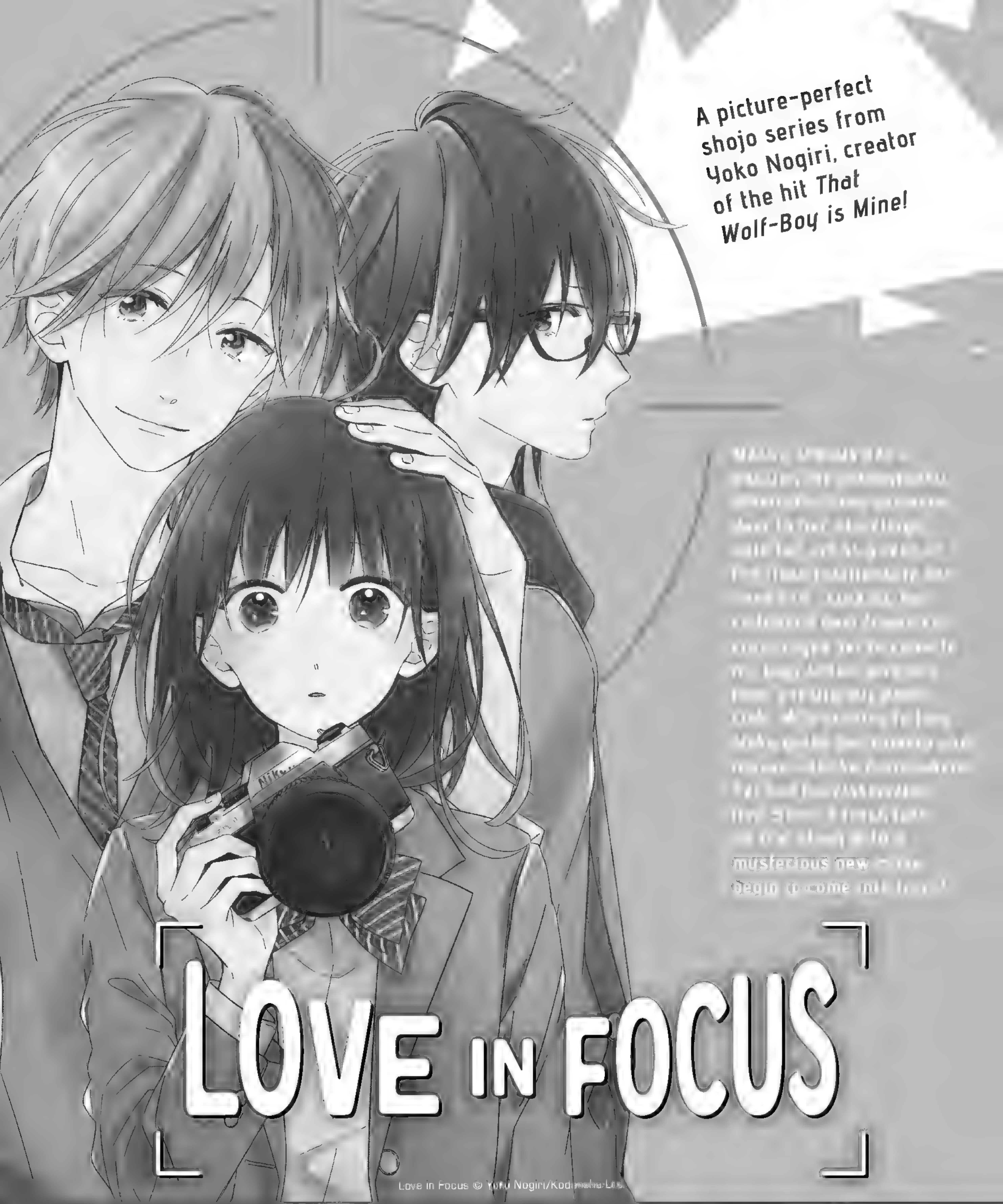
Ten-year-old Sakura Kinomoto lives a pretty normal life with her older brother, Tōya, and widowed father, Fujitaka—until the day she discovers a strange book in her father's library, and her life takes a magical turn...

- A deluxe large-format hardcover edition of CLAMP's shojo manga classic
- All-new foil-stamped cover art on each volume
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Cardcaptor Sakura Collector's Edition © CLAMP • Shigatsu Tsutachi Co., Ltd. / Kodansha Ltd







A picture-perfect  
shojo series from  
Yoko Nogiri, creator  
of the hit *That  
Wolf-Boy is Mine!*

After the success of her first series, *That Wolf-Boy is Mine!*, Yoko Nogiri returns with a new shojo series, *Love in Focus*. The story follows a young woman who is a photography enthusiast and a young man who is a mystery. The series is a romantic comedy that explores the relationship between the two characters as they navigate their way through life and love. The art style is typical of shojo manga, with large expressive eyes and detailed character designs. The story is set in a modern urban environment, and the characters are depicted in various settings, including a photography studio and a city street. The series is a must-read for fans of shojo manga and photography.

# 「LOVE IN FOCUS」

Love in Focus © Yoko Nogiri/Kodansha Ltd.

Praise for Yoko Nogiri's *That Wolf-Boy is Mine!*

—Otaku USA Magazine

"A series that is pure shojo sugar—a cute love story about two nice people looking for their places in the world, and finding them with each other." —Anime News Network

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*Anime now streaming  
on Amazon Prime!*

The prestigious Dahlia Academy educates the elite of society from two countries; To the East is the Nation of Touwa; across the sea the other way, the Principality of West. The nations, though, are fierce rivals, and their students are constantly feuding—which means Romio Inuzuka, head of Touwa's first-year students, has a problem. He's fallen for his counterpart from West, Juliet Persia, and when he can't take it any more, he confesses his feelings.

Now Romio has two problems:  
A girlfriend, and a secret...

# Boarding School

# Juliet

By Yousuke Kaneda

"A fine romantic comedy... The chemistry between the two main characters is excellent and the humor is great, backed up by a fun enough supporting cast and a different twist on the genre." —AiPT





ANIME OUT NOW  
FROM SENTAI FILMWORKS!

A BL romance between a good  
boy who didn't know he was  
waiting for a hero, and a bad boy  
who comes to his rescue!

Masahiro Setagawa  
doesn't believe in heroes,  
but wishes he could:  
He's found himself in  
a gang of small-time  
street bullies, and with  
no prospects for a real  
future. But when high  
school teacher (and  
scourge of the streets)  
Kousuke Ohshiba comes  
to his rescue, he finds  
he may need to start  
believing after all...  
in heroes, and in his  
budding feelings, too.

# Hitorijime My Hero

Memeco Arii



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The slow-burn queer romance that'll sweep you off your feet!

# 10 DANCE

*Inouesatoh presents*

10 DANCE © Inouesatoh Kodansha Ltd

"A FANTASTIC DEBUT VOLUME... ONE OF MY FAVORITE BOOKS OF THE YEAR..."  
— AiPT!

"10 DANCE IS A MUST-READ FOR ANYONE WHO'S ENJOYED MANGA AND ANIME ABOUT COMPETITIVE DANCE (ON OR OFF THE ICE!)."  
— Anime UK News

Shinya Sugiki, the dashing lord of Standard Ballroom, and Shinya Suzuki, passionate king of Latin Dance: The two share more than just a first name and a love of the sport. They each want to become champion of the 10-Dance Competition, which means they'll need to learn the other's specialty dances, and who better to learn from than the best? But old rivalries die hard, and things get further complicated when they realize there might be more between them than an uneasy partnership...



"I'm pleasantly surprised to find modern shojo using cross-dressing as a dramatic device to deliver social commentary... Recommended."

-Otaku USA Magazine



# The. prince in his dark days

By **Hico Yamanaka**

A drunkard for a father, a household of poverty... For 17-year-old Atsuko, misfortune is all she knows and believes in. Until one day, a chance encounter with Itaru-the wealthy heir of a huge corporation-changes everything. The two look identical, uncannily so. When Itaru curiously goes missing, Atsuko is roped into being his stand-in. There, in his shoes, Atsuko must parade like a prince in a palace. She encounters many new experiences, but at what cost...?



# Yuri Is My Job!

miman

JOIN US FOR  
AFTERNOON TEA  
WITH EQUAL PARTS  
YURI, ROM-COM,  
AND DRAMA!



Yuri is My Job! © Miman/Ichijinsha Inc.

Hime is a picture-perfect high school princess, so when she accidentally injures a café manager named Mai, she's willing to cover some shifts to keep her façade intact. To Hime's surprise, the café is themed after a private school where the all-female staff always puts on their best act for their loyal customers. However, under the guidance of the most graceful girl there, Hime can't help but blush and blunder! Beneath all the frills and laughter, Hime feels tension brewing as she finds out more about her new job and her budding feelings...

KC  
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COMICS

"A quirky, fun comedy series... If you're a yuri fan, or perhaps interested in getting into it but not sure where to start, this book is worth picking up."

— Anime UK News



## **Magus of the Library 2**

KODANSHA COMICS Digital Edition

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